Fresh Leaves

in

The Book

and

Its Story.

By L. B. B.

Mary I Pearce

from

Mrs Hayward (the Author

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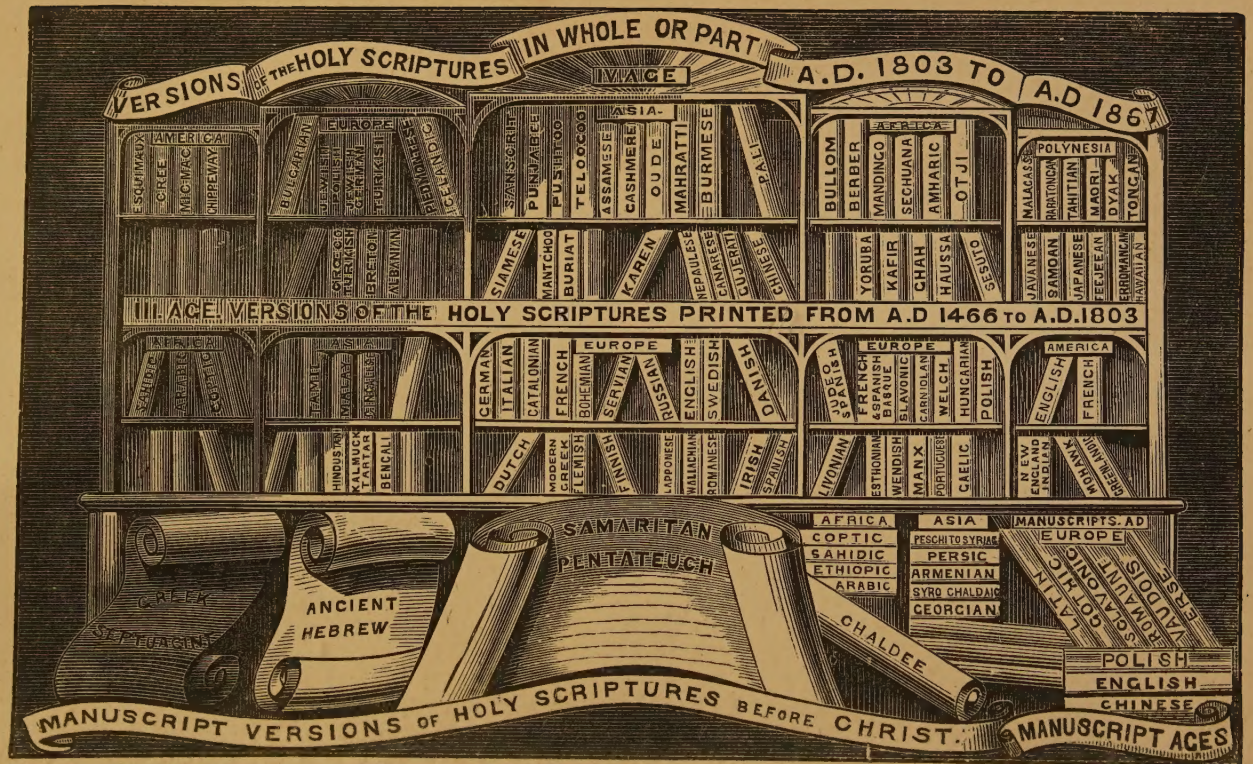

THE BIBLE LIBRARY OF THE WORLD AND ITS FOUR AGES

FRESH LEAVES

IN

THE OLD TESTAMENT PART

OF

The Book and its Story.

BY

L. N. R.

WITH SEVENTY ILLUSTRATIONS.

LONDON:
WILLIAM MACINTOSH,
24, PATERNOSTER ROW;
AND ALL OTHER BOOKSELLERS.
1869.

PREFACE.

THOSE who have followed this volume in its course of monthly issue, will be aware of its intent and purpose. It directs to the STORY of the DIVINE BOOK, *as contained in itself*, marks the inspired men who tell it, and shews how the separate books of the Old Testament are, as it were, built into one another, each one successively needful to the understanding of those which come after it.

These FRESH LEAVES have been issued in large print for those who do not read very easily, but who wish to be presented, when they sit down to read the Bible, with some thoughts and facts about each of its books, which shall help them to read it *intelligently*, not merely as a duty, and to perceive the bearing of its various parts upon each other. We have had some testimony already from "Bible-women," "City Missionaries," and "Working-men," that it is the kind of book *they* wanted "on a Sunday afternoon." But now it appears as a volume, it is by no means limited to their circle, and it is hoped it may be found useful in Sunday-schools and Bible classes, and to young people in general.

These Leaves are intended to convey information in a clear and simple way which in these days every Bible reader should possess, and to lead to further search of the Holy Scriptures for spiritual profit.

It is hoped that each careful reader will have a Bible at hand, to turn to the passage mentioned, and will lift up a prayer, in the name of Christ, for

the Holy Ghost—whom "the Father will send,"—"who shall teach us all things," "bring all things to remembrance," and "guide us into all truth."

The volume has XVII Nos. or Chapters:—

No. I. "The World before the Flood,"
II. "The Times between the Flood and Abram,"
III. "The Life of Abraham,"
IV. "Arabia and the Patriarch Job,"
V. "Abraham, Jacob, and Joseph, in Egypt,"
VI. "Moses, the Servant of God,"
VII. "From Egypt to Sinai,"
VIII. "The Giving of the Law on Mount Sinai,"
IX. "The Graves in the Wilderness,"
X. "The Closing Year in the Wilderness,"
XI. "Joshua, Moses' Minister,"
XII. "The Times of the Book of Judges,"
XIII. "Samuel the Prophet,"
XIV. "The Times of the Kings and the Prophets,"
XV. "From Elisha to Isaiah."
XVI. "The Fall of Judah,"
XVII. "Jeremiah and the Nations,"
XVIII. "The Prophets of the Captivity and the Return of the Remnant."

Hence the world's history, by an unerring hand, is seen to be given in that of *one* particular nation still everywhere scattered and known of all. The whole of the Old Testament concerns them, and God teaches *all* nations by their fall from His favor. It is written—"They are enemies for your sakes, but they are beloved for the fathers' sakes;" and it is written also—"There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob." (Rom. xi. 28, 26.)

L. N. R.

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THE TIMES BEFORE OUR BIBLE.

No. I.

We do not wish our Biblewomen to be *learned* teachers, they never can become so, but we wish them to be wise, to win souls. All true wisdom is found in the Scriptures, and they should know something of the wonderful story of the Book they circulate.

And the men and women who buy the Bible, or already possess it, though perhaps it lies dusty on their shelves, should learn a few things about it which would shew them what a treasure it is, and how it *proves itself* to be the most truthful book in the world.

The Bible is one great narrative or Inspired Story, which falls into distinct parts. It was once called by the name of "The Books," "The Divine Library," but now by common consent, and for the last 700 years, it is called The Book, or The Bible. In the first part of the Bible we find *the five books of Moses*. They were afterwards called by Grecian Jews, the Pentateuch.

Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy, are the names of the books. These, and probably the book of Job also, were all written before the Israelites entered Canaan, the Land of Promise; the five books of Moses formed their early Bible, the Book of the Law or *Torâh*, which was laid up in the side of the ark for a witness to the people.

We can learn the state of the world before the Pentateuch was written, from Moses only, who tells the story of the earth from the beginning, though he was not born till 777 years after the Flood; and we may well believe that God inspired him to convey all that it was chiefly important to us to know about the drowned world. There is a meaning in the *silence* of Holy Scripture, and infinite wisdom has decided what it should reveal.

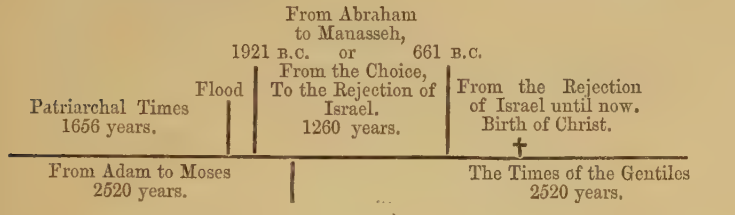
At the beginning of his second book—EXODUS, Moses gives us his own history and parentage. He was a grandson of Levi, who was the third son of Jacob, and Abraham's great-grandson. Moses was himself the great-great-grandson of Isaac, "the chosen seed of Abraham." Isaac stood twenty-first from Adam, and Moses only twenty-fifth; Enoch being the seventh, and Eber the fourteenth in descent.

Jochebed, the mother of Moses, was Levi's daughter, and her great-grandfather Isaac had lived on to the thirty-fourth year of his grandson Levi. It is quite possible that Isaac may have seen and known SHEM, who had lived a hundred years with Methuselah, whose life had crossed Adam's by 243 years.

Jochebed, the mother of Moses and Aaron, would surely receive from her father's own lips what he had heard from Isaac, and Isaac from Shem, of the world before the Flood.

How few the links, and how clearly to be traced! Adam, Methuselah, Shem, Isaac, Levi, Jochebed, Moses. These seven united lives extended over 2520 years, (not inclusive of the last thirty-three years of Moses with the people in the wilderness) during which time many parts of the first five books of the Bible are concluded to have been written.

The whole of human history is represented by the following line, according to the Scripture chronology, or time-table, and if this is once understood it will be easy to remember the place of any narratives in the Bible.



Now we wish in our first three tracts to consider the space, on the left hand, of 2520 years, which is made up as follows—

1656 Before the Flood.
777 After it to the birth of Moses.
87 Years of the life of Moses, including the first
—— seven of the wanderings of Israel in the wil-
2520 derness, during which the laws of Jehovah were given and recorded. They were to be read to the people every seven years after their entrance to the Promised Land.

And how do we know that this was the length of the Patriarchal Age?

By the testimony of the book of Genesis itself; look at the 5th chapter. Do you wonder why we are so particularly told there how long each patriarch lived, and how old he was when his first son was born? perhaps you think—

"We will not read that chapter, the people were born and they died, that seems all."

But *it is not all.* From that chapter and the 10th chapter you can make for yourselves two tables of the age of the world before the Law was given on

Mount Sinai. In case you have not time, we have prepared them for you, that you may have them to refer to if you hear people quote the *longer* genealogies of the *heathen* nations of Egypt and China, and India, etc. There is no revelation from God to prove *them*, but He has chosen to give us a Chronology or Table of Time in His own Book, and why should we not receive it along with the History?

TABLE OF AGE OF THE PATRIARCHS BEFORE THE FLOOD.

	BORN.		DIED.		
	Before the Flood.	Year of the World.	Before the Flood.	Year of the World.	Total Age.
Adam . . .	1656	1	726	930	930
Seth . . .	1526	130	614	1042	912
Enos . . .	1421	235	516	1140	905
Cainan . .	1331	325	421	1235	910
Mahalaleel .	1261	395	366	1290	895
Jared . . .	1196	460	234	1422	962
Enoch . . .	1034	622	669 (translated)	987	365
Methuselah .	969	687		1656	969
Lamech . .	782	874	5	1651	777
Noah . . .	600	1056			600
Shem . . .	98	1553			98

TABLE OF AGE OF THE PATRIARCHS AFTER THE FLOOD.

		BORN.		DIED.		
		After the Flood.	Before Christ.	After the Flood.	Before Christ.	Total Age.
Gen. x., xi., xii.	Noah	..	..	350	1998	950
	Shem	..	..	500	1848	598
	Arphaxad	2	2346	440	1908	438
	Salah	37	2311	470	1878	433
	Eber	67	2281	531	1817	464
	Peleg	101	2247	340	2008	239
	Reu	131	2217	370	1978	239
	Serug	163	2185	393	1955	230
	Nahor	193	2155	341	2007	148
	Terah	222	2126	427	1921	205
	Abraham	352	1996	527	1821	175
xvi., xxv.	Ishmael	438	1910	575	1773	137
xxi., xxxv.	Isaac	452	1896	632	1716	180
xxv., xlvii.	Jacob	512	1836	659	1689	147
	Esau	512	1836			
xxxvii., xli., l.	Joseph	603	1745	713	1635	110
xxxvi. 33.	Job	597	1751	837	1511	240
Exod. vi.	Levi	598	1750	735	1613	137
	Kohath	623	1725	756	1592	133
	Amram	702	1646	839	1509	137
	Moses	777	1571	897	1451	120

It is very singular that with Moses this table of the length of the patriarchal lives ceases, and can no further be traced through Levi; it continues beyond Jacob only in the case of that *one* of his twelve sons, Levi; for the ages of all the others, except Joseph's, are left untold, and cannot be discovered. At this point the record seems to have accomplished its purpose.

It is very probable, though we have no proof of it, that the art of writing was known before the Flood. There may have been certain documents preserved in the tents of the patriarchs, which, as we have seen, *seven* of these long-lived and holy men were sufficient to hand down, and they doubtless too talked over their contents one to another. The history contained in Genesis could not have been narrated by Moses, *as an eye-witness;* but whether he received it by immediate suggestion from God, or was directed by His Holy Spirit to the use of earlier documents, does not affect the inspiration of the book at all.

Moses takes but the first seven chapters of Genesis to describe the state of the world before the Flood. It was an evil day; and two men could have told all its story—Adam and Methuselah, whose lives stretched across the whole period, which yet was less only by 200 years than our own era since the birth of Christ. There seemed a freshness *then* in the relations between God and man which we scarcely meet with afterwards in all the Divine records. We hear of no written law; but of voices direct from heaven: "God spake to one patriarch after another." The Lord God *said* to Adam or to Noah, and He speaks in judgment to Cain.

To Adam and Eve, after the cruel death of Abel, a third son was given—SETH, meaning appointed;

he was the appointed one, through whose line the Redeemer of the lost world would come; for there was a Gospel, or "good tidings" of restoration from the curse even before the Flood: a revelation, or the rolling back of a veil from the purposes of God, see (Gen. iii. 15). Seth has a son, whom he names Enos, and "then began men to call upon" (or to call themselves by) "the name of the Lord."

Adam was but 235 years old when his grandson Enos was born, and he may have lived with his grandfather 700 years. It seems that thus early there arose those who were known as the "sons of God" in the midst of an evil generation who were of the sons of men—always "striving with their maker," and to whom Job alludes in the 22nd chapter of his ancient book (16, 17 verses) as "wicked men"—

"Which were cut down out of time, whose foundation was overflown with a flood: which said unto God, Depart from us: and what can the Almighty do for them?"

Or as the Rev. C. P. Carey has it in his translation—

"Were questioning what the Almighty had done for them, when yet He filled their houses with good."

Yet these "sons of men" were strong and mighty, able and inventive; and their daughters were so fair that their beauty beguiled the sons of God, and drew them from their separateness from the sinful world. Ere Adam died, Tubal Cain, Cain's descendant, had been working for centuries in brass and iron, and instructing other artificers to fashion tools, and doubtless weapons; the song of Lamech, Gen. iv. 23, is supposed to be a chant of triumph over the possession of a sword; and Jubal of the same race and era had sought out the witcheries of music, and he was already the father of all who "handled the harp and the organ."

Cain had gone out with his family from the presence of the Lord (possibly the cherubic presence at the gate of Eden).

"At the east of the garden of Eden were cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life." (Gen. iii. 24.)

All the hearts and lives of Cain's posterity were given, we may suppose, to the advance of arts and manufactures, and of their *own* glory. There were giants in those days, and with their long life and vast strength it is fearful to think of their rate of progress away from God. Cain himself had built the first "fenced city," and Lamech, Cain's great, great, great grandson, was the first man who took two wives.

Have we ever thought men did not know or do much in those early days? Why, if they learn to do so much *now* in seventy or eighty years, what must they have done in seven hundred? A man makes a discovery or an improvement *now*, and he dies before he can perceive its full results. All he can do to hand it down, is to write about it; but in those days a man could build thought upon thought, experiment upon experiment, for hundreds of years, and he could shew hundreds of other people who had taste for the same things all that he had performed. Many people dispute this length of patriarchal life, which, judging by man's present constitution, they say, would be in itself a continual miracle, and they add, "perhaps years mean *months*."

How can that be?

"Seth lived 105 years, and begat Enos"; and if it was read 105 *months*, then he was a father before he was nine years old! No; we must consider that the great age of the first patriarchs was in their

time appointed of God. The past in this case cannot be measured by the *present*. There is no earthly historian but Moses of the ages before the Flood; and he was inspired of God. God says to Joshua "As I was with Moses; so I will be with thee," (Josh i. 5); and David witnesses, "The Lord made known his ways unto Moses." No other human writing has remained from that age to distract our faith. God asked for faith in HIMSELF from Enoch, from Noah, and from Abraham; and He asks it from *us* now: "Without faith it is impossible to please God."

Alas! our Lord Jesus Himself said, "When the Son of man cometh shall he find faith on the earth?" and this coming must have been His coming *again*, for it relates to the avenging of His own elect. (Luke xviii. 8.) So that when we see infidelity and superstition growing up like rank weeds higher and higher around us, as they are doing at present, it is more than ever important for us to examine what we DO believe about the Book of God, and to notice how very early in its pages we are led to think of the judgments coming in our latter days on ungodly sinners for all their "hard speeches" concerning the God they do not know.

Faith in God often involves not seeing how a thing can be, and yet believing that it *was*, because God says it.

Belief in HIMSELF was evidently the first "righteousness" that God demanded from man, for it would be the root of all obedience. If he did not believe God he would not obey Him; and we may well suppose that Adam's simple confidence in his Creator was *entire* as that of the little child in its father and its mother to this day, before its sinful nature or sad experience makes it disbelieve them.

When Abram's trust in God was asked for, beneath the arch of the starry heavens, by the God of all their hosts, (Gen. xv. 5, 6,) *he* believed in the Lord, and "it was counted to him for righteousness." The practical form of belief is displayed in Enoch also, who "walked with God," and must have enjoyed intimate converse with Him; for if he were informed—as, according to St. Jude, he was—of the *second* coming of the Lord to Judgment, with ten thousand of His saints, he could scarcely have been left ignorant of the earlier event of the Lord's *first coming as a sacrifice* to redeem our sinful race.

Sacrifices of animals to God for every sin were claimed of men as soon as they had passed the gate of Eden; which early *sign-ified* that nothing the earth could offer — none of its fairest fruits or flowers, the reward of man's first industry, would suffice to please God; only the lamb slain, type of "the Lamb of God slain from the foundation of the world," whom we find named in Rev. xiii. 8. From the time of the first sin men were taught that if they were to be saved from it, it would cost the price of blood. This was the Gospel before the Flood.

And if Belief in what God said, was the first "righteousness," Doubt, introduced by the devil, was the first sin. "Yea, *hath* God said?" were the words of the serpent. The belief God asked of the first men was in a *future* sacrifice, as of us it is required in one that is *past*. Men before the Flood could not know of Jesus Christ, a Saviour suffering death for sinners, as we know Him, but they had a knowledge of God's names, as *Elohim*, God of Gods, and Jehovah Elohim, "Lord God." The plural word, Gods, (Elohim,) is used alone in the story of

the creation of the world, narrated in the first chapter of Genesis; but from the third verse of the second chapter, Jehovah Elohim, "LORD GOD," is employed in reference to Divine communication with the human pair. In the whole conversation of the serpent in the third chapter, only the first name, GOD, is again used, and by Eve also; but the after judgment of the culprits is by the "LORD GOD," the Jehovah Elohim. Jehovah was the visible manifestation to man of Elohim, the Uncreated, the Self-existent, the Unseen, and Eternal. The Book of Job brings down to us the beliefs of the patriarchal age on this head. "Behold, God is great," says Elihu, "and we know not, neither can search out the number of his years." (xxxvi. 26.) And the LORD, the JEHOVAH, is represented as answering Job Himself out of the whirlwind:—

"Then the Lord answered Job out of the whirlwind, and said . . . . Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth? . . . . Who hath laid the measures thereof, ... or who laid the corner stone thereof; when the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy?" (xxxviii.1—7.)

In the first chapter of St. John's Gospel this eternal existence is said to be that of the Word:—

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made. In him was life; and the life was the light of men."

"And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not."

The same Divine Being had been described more than a thousand years before the time of St. John, as it is supposed, by Solomon, in the 8th chapter of Proverbs, under the name of "Wisdom." Of Him it is said,—

"The Lord possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old. I was set up from everlasting, from the

beginning, or ever the earth was. When he prepared the heavens, I was there.....when he established the clouds above.....when he appointed the foundations of the earth: then I was by him, as one brought up with him: and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him; rejoicing in the habitable part of his earth; and my delights were with the sons of men."

Here is Divine history, given independently of Moses, concerning the days of Adam and his *holy* descendants; Moses verifies it in the 90th Psalm, which is ascribed to him:—

"Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God."

Adam had been made, we must remember, in the image of God. What a glorious likeness! We are told in Col. i. 15, that the image of the invisible God is His dear Son, "the firstborn of every creature, who is before all things." Adam, fallen from the perfect likeness of Jehovah, must yet have retained much of the God-like in his human character; he was not left without God and without hope in the world; and though the image was defaced, he must surely have been a preacher of righteousness like Noah—of the righteousness of believing in God.

Adam is not mentioned in Genesis, and Noah is not mentioned, after the fall of each under the dominion of sin; but Adam must have had a law given him; and a race sprang from him after his wicked Cain and his murdered Abel, who sought to live by the law. Noah is spoken of as a just man. To be just is to live by a law; and the violence and corruption which speedily overspread the earth was the constant breaking of that law: man set up his own will against God's will.

The Destroyer had entered Paradise, and taught

men to question the truth and justice of God, as they do to this day.

Yet Adam had some children who walked with God, while others walked with the devil. Enoch followed Abel ere long into the unveiled presence of Jehovah through faith in the blood, being the first example of "one taken and another left."

The Divine Word had given these two, though born in sin, "power to become the sons of God." Adam had eaten of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, and how he must have mourned when he saw that the words and deeds of most of his children were only evil, and that continually,—and mark how the short, sad tale goes on.

"God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and it grieved him at his heart that he had made man, and the Lord said, I will destroy both man and beast, for it repenteth me that I have made them."

Before this resolve was executed, God must have called to Himself every soul that served and loved Him. The rest, as our Saviour while upon earth told His disciples, (Matt. xvii. 25), went on eating and drinking, marrying, and giving in marriage; and it was not holy marriage like that in Eden. "They took them wives of all which they chose," till the day that Noah entered into the ark, and the Flood came and destroyed them all.

If Methuselah, Enoch's son in Seth's holy line, loved the Lord as he surely did, he was the last who loved and trusted God besides Noah and his family. He doubtless died a natural death, having lived longer than any man before him, and then the prophecy uttered in his name, "Methuselah," was fulfilled. "He dies, and it is sent." Noah alone, with his sons and their wives for his sake, "found grace in the eyes of the Lord." By express Divine

ARMENIA, MESOPOTAMIA, PALESTINE, AND ARABIA.

command He prepared an ark for the saving of his house. St. Paul fills up his history for us. (Heb. xi. 7.)

"By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith."

Dear friends, we can give you in this first number of our "LEAVES," no picture of the mountains, or the cities, or the temples of that old world; nothing but Mount Ararat—the bridge between the old world and the new,*—and a MAP of its position.

Let us look back at its picture, and think how long that peak must have battled with the stormy surges, and seen the last sun of the old world sink beneath those billows mountain-high; till at last itself also was blotted from the landscape. That loftiest peak, too, must have first emerged from the waters as they went down. If you could attain its summit, you might now look forth on *four* broad seas—the BLACK SEA, the CASPIAN SEA, the MEDITERRANEAN SEA, and the PERSIAN GULF. Moses makes no mention of these in his narrative, but he does of the Rivers TIGRIS and EUPHRATES, which you will find also marked here. *They* are said to have had their source in EDEN, therefore the place of the Garden of Paradise cannot have been far distant.

Our picture represents a plain, the plain of the Araxes, which is itself 3000 feet above the level of the sea. From this plain the summits of the ARMENIAN highlands rise 7000 feet higher, bearing on their mighty shoulders the greater and lesser Ararat, the greater cone being 7000 feet higher still.

* "And the ark rested upon the mountains of Ararat."—Gen. viii. 4.

If you stood in the outskirts of the city of Nakchevan (meaning *place of descent*), of which some buildings are seen in the picture, you could look across that wide low valley of the Araxes and see Mount Ararat from base to summit at the distance of 100 miles. If you beheld it at early dawn, rising 14,000 feet from the plain, the ice-clad cone would be silvered with the light of day, while the purple of night yet enfolded it below. The sun's first rays begin to crown it with gold, and then spread downwards towards its foundations.

We are not told that the ark of Noah rested on the steepest summit of Ararat, and to ascend this was believed by the Armenians who dwell around it to be supernaturally forbidden till, in 1829, Professor Parrot, a German, under Russian auspices, after two failures, at last gained a footing on the brow of eternal ice, unbroken by rock or stone; he found it a slightly convex surface, about 200 paces in circuit, declining steeply on all sides. The ark could not certainly have rested there.

The Professor looked down upon the lesser Ararat 4000 feet lower, whose head, as viewed from this higher point, did not appear like a cone, but like the top of a square pyramid with larger and smaller forms rising up at the edges and in the middle, so that it looked somewhat like a Druidical circle with its central object; and this is a curious fact when compared with the notion which many entertain, that the ark did in fact rest on the lesser Ararat; as it is not easy to see how its inmates, including heavy cattle, could possibly have descended from the highest cone.

Nothing is said about the shape of the ark in Scripture, but its size is given, "300 cubits in length, 50 in breadth, and 30 in height." The

cubit is supposed to be the measure from a man's elbow to the tip of his forefinger; or about 21 inches. If so, Noah's ark would be 525 feet long, 87 feet broad, and 52 feet high. This is *very much* larger than the largest British man-of-war. SOLOMON'S TEMPLE in 1 Kings vi. 2, was the same height as the ARK, but only one fifth of the length, and less than one half the width.

This huge structure was only intended *to float* on the water, and had neither mast, sail, nor rudder. It was an enormous floating house, "kept safe by the power of God"; built so that it should ride steadily, and afford ample room for stowage. It was divided into a number of "nests," or small compartments, arranged in three tiers, one above another, "lower, second, and third stories"; and had, it has been supposed, a line of narrow sky-lights running its whole length at the top, for which some transparent substance must have been used to prevent the entrance of the rain. The "window" Noah opened, may have been a small compartment of the large one.

The long-suffering of God had waited 120 years while the ark was preparing, (1 Peter iii. 20), and then Noah and his family, with all the animals who were to be saved, in their various allotted numbers, entered by the door, which was placed in the side of the ark—a process which occupied seven days—and "God shut them in," and the rest of the human race were left to perish in their unbelief; they "knew not till the flood came and took them all away."

Our Saviour, when upon earth, declares this; and the Apostles Paul and Peter witness to it. The Lord God doeth as He will among the armies of heaven and the inhabitants of the earth." The

architects of that old world, its builders of cities, its shepherds and owners of vast flocks and herds, its mighty masters of music and song, and its artificers in metals, its kings and princes and its working people—men, women, and children—all sank in the waters. Their death-struggles, and their cries of despair, are not described; nor the frantic partings, not even NOAH'S grief at the judgment which he and his alone escaped. The 7th chapter of Genesis closes only with the announcement of the entire extinction of all animal life, in the world before the Flood.

"And the waters prevailed exceedingly upon the earth; and all the high hills, that were under the whole heaven, were covered. Fifteen cubits upwards did the waters prevail; and the mountains were covered. And all flesh died that moved upon the earth, both of fowl, and of cattle, and of beast, and of every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth, and every man: all in whose nostrils was the breath of life, of all that was in the dry land, died. And every living substance was destroyed which was upon the face of the ground, both man, and cattle, and the creeping things, and the fowl of the heaven; and they were destroyed from the earth: and Noah only remained alive, and they that were with him in the ark. And the waters prevailed upon the earth an hundred and fifty days."

Thus ends the story of the *first seven chapters of our Bible.*

And there stand out in this story several events which are different to those to which we are accustomed in the "latter days" in which *we* live.

There is the creation of Adam and Eve as full and perfect beings who knew no infancy.

There is the translation of Enoch from earth to heaven, who knew no death.

There is the long life of the patriarchal races and the years of the world's age to be counted by their means: and the fact that *seven* lives of people who

may have seen and talked with each other, extended from Adam to Moses, 2520 years.

There is a positive and actual intercourse carried on between heaven and earth. "God spake," and man replied, and yet men in general did not believe in God; the gifts of their long life and gigantic strength had only been used by them for purposes of violence and corruption; there was a vast *one-ness* amongst them in that day, like the union we desire so much in modern days, but it was a *one-ness against God.* They bade Him depart from them, and He said, "My spirit shall no longer strive with man." After ages of mercy and forbearance He swept them to destruction—and swept away too the Garden of Eden, so utterly, that its particular site should not be remembered. *At its gate had stood the unearthly Cherubim*, and those signs of His Presence, when the earth rose again from the waters appear to have been *withdrawn.* Noah must have *heard* all particulars of what he had not *seen* from his grandfather, Methuselah, with whom he lived 600 years, and Shem, the great-grandson of the family, would have listened to the narrations which Methuselah could have had direct from Adam, and would have laid them up in *his* memory for the information of those who should live 500 years after the Flood.

And what does the Apostle Peter tell us in reference to these Times before the Flood, which some think such an old world tale that it can be of no consequence for us to hear it?

He mentions it 2400 years after it happened, and after the death of Jesus on the Cross and His ascension to heaven, leaving a promise to His disciples

that He would come again. He mentions it to arrest the attention of scoffers, who said—

"Where is the promise of His coming?"

So Peter answers them by reference to Noah's flood, "whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished."

What does he say, so long afterwards?

"But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men."

And what is the Apostle's inference?

"Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness?" and "Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless." (2 Peter iii. 11, 14.)

To be blameless we must be clothed in the robe of Christ's righteousness, and not our own.

We should notice St. Peter's last injunction to the Christians of his day—

"Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know *these things* before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own stedfastness. But grow in grace, and *in* the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him *be* glory both now and for ever. Amen." (2 Peter iii. 17, 18.)

N.B.—Our *Second* Number of the LEAVES FROM THE BOOK AND ITS STORY, will tell you of the *Second* Age before the Bible—The Space between the Flood and Abraham.

Our *Third* Number—Of the Space between Abraham and Moses.

TEMPLE OF ANCIENT NINEVEH (RESTORED AFTER LAYARD).

THE TIMES BEFORE OUR BIBLE WAS WRITTEN.

No. II.

THE story of the Times between the Flood and Abram's call by God, to be "the Father of a great Nation," begins with the 8th chapter of Genesis, and ends at the 5th verse of the 12th chapter.

Our time-table in LEAVES No. I. will shew you that Abram was born 352 years after the Deluge, and he was called of God out of Haran when he was seventy-five years old. 352 and seventy-five make 427 years—a space of time almost equal to the 430 years which followed—from Abram's call to the deliverance of his children from their bondage in Egypt, by the hand of Moses. Paul tells us of *that* 430 years in his Epistle to the Galatians, iii. 17.

"The law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot make the promise (to Abraham and his seed) of none effect."

We shall always give you in these LEAVES the passages from the Gospels and Epistles in the New Testament, which are the surest explanation of Old Testament history, for they are not the words of Matthew, or Luke, Peter, Paul, or John, merely; they are the utterance of the Holy Ghost Himself, through those inspired men, on the subjects which we wish to understand.

Now we will enquire what were the chief events of the first-named 427 years.

The Covenant of God with Noah.

The rapid re-peopling of the earth.

The founding of the Tower of Babel, and the Confusion of tongues.

The rise of the Chaldean and Egyptian empires.

The beginning of Idolatry.

The coming forth of Terah, Abram's father, from "Ur of the Chaldees," to go into the land of Canaan.

The new chapter of human history opens with the remarkable words "And GOD remembered NOAH," and bade him go forth from the ark; and ere its close we find that NOAH remembered GOD, and builded an altar (the first that is mentioned in Scripture) and offered burnt offerings upon it, from which it is said the Lord "smelled a sweet savour, or a savour of rest"—perhaps of rest from His "strange work" of judgment—and declared that He would not again smite anymore everything living as He had done.

The smelling of a sweet savour in Noah's sacrifice—had also respect to his faith in Christ. Nothing else could have pleased God—who condescends at this period to make a fresh Covenant with men, of free and eternal promise; and says—

"I do set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a token of a covenant between me and the earth." (Gen. ix. 13.)

The bright and beautiful rainbow is a sign in heaven which surely still binds *us* and the men of Noah's age together, reminding us what God *can do* to destroy His enemies, and what He *will not* again do by His own promise. May not the judgment of the Deluge itself have arisen from the longing of Jehovah to redeem the world from its rule of iniquity, and restore to it a race to whom He might *anew* reveal Himself in love and mercy? "The history of the Christ of God does not begin with His birth in Bethlehem," says a Christian Jew.

"His goings forth are from of old; and the Gospel histories of Him are like a high table-land, to which we cannot be spared the *ascent*, from Genesis to Malachi;" for was He not "the LORD GOD of Shem," of whom Noah spoke after he came forth from the ark; who repeated the blessing of Adam and Eve to Noah and his household, "Be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth?" and who gave a-fresh to man, dominion over the animal creation, fish, flesh, and fowl; and now ordained *meat* for his own sustenance as well as every herb and fruit permitted to him in the former world?

Again it is declared that God made man in His own image, and that therefore His blood must not be shed except by the hand of justice, which marks the first institution of something like the magistrate's office. Thus a law was given with emphasis against murder, and against eating blood for food; the latter injunction being observed by the posterity of children of Israel at the present day.

As the waters had gradually receded, how those preserved in the ark must have gazed downwards from their mountain height to retrace, if possible, any features of the former seats of habitation. The Garden of Eden had been situated in the neighbourhood of four rivers, and two of these are recognized by their old names after the Flood,—the Euphrates and the Tigris. You will find them on the map in Tract No. I. The highlands of Armenia, which encircle Mount Ararat, were well adapted to be the central spot whence the new race of men should pour forth on all sides of the world. Around the Four Seas they made their earliest settlements, and these became the high roads of trade and travel; but we do not hear anything of Noah's own migration.

As the devil had glided in the form of a serpent into Eden, so neither was he absent in his wicked influence at the descent of the patriarch and his sons from Ararat. The soil of Armenia is still most favourable for the cultivation of the vine, and here Noah planted a vineyard; and the tempter again presented fruit (as to Eve, but this time it was the grape, in intoxicating form) to the venerable father, and then he stirred the spirit of his son Ham to earn his curse. Noah's influence must have been weakened by this inconsistency, and over that one of his descendants who needed it the most. But it does not seem that God withdrew from him the spirit of prophecy, for his blessing and his curse upon his three sons has proved to be a short but faithful sketch of the history of the nations and of the kingdom of God in the earth.

The *curse* is *first* delivered, and on HAM, through his youngest son, Canaan; Ham's own name meant "swarthy," Shem's, "renown," and Japheth's, "he that extends."—Thus ran the patriarch's prophecy:—

"Cursed be Canaan; a servant of servants (or the meanest of servants) shall he be unto his brethren.

"Blessed be the Lord God of Shem; and Canaan shall be his servant.

"God shall enlarge Japheth, and he shall dwell in the tents of Shem; and Canaan shall be his servant."

The 10th chapter of Genesis, 21st verse, tells us that Japheth was the elder son; chapter xi. 10 says, that Shem was one hundred years old, two years after the Deluge, therefore ninety-eight when it began. Noah's age was then six hundred years, and by Gen. v. 32, *one* of his sons was then a hundred years old. So the genealogy rightly begins with Japheth, and by him and his were the "isles of the Gentiles divided in their lands." The Shemites were to receive the law of the Lord, and

to preserve it for the world. Shem's filial love had rescued his father Noah from reproach and contempt; he had remembered the natural law of honour due to parents; and Japheth, who shared in his deed, was to be enlarged and spread abroad. *His* descendants govern Europe and America, and even a portion of Asia. He was to enjoy the privileges, and even to "dwell in the tents" of Shem till the grand prophecy in the 11th of Romans, comes to be fulfilled.

The 10th of Genesis is a wonderful chapter. It contains a precious old document, called the TOLDOTH BENI NOAH, "The book of the generations of the sons of Noah," and the more light that modern research and travel bring to bear upon the state of countries, nations, and languages, the more it is shown how true is the Scripture in its few but important details of history, chronology, and geography; and how true in comparison with the confused and uncertain traditions of other nations.

For some considerable time after coming out of the ark, men are declared to have spoken one language, but this does not imply that they all dwelt together. The experience of the Deluge alone would have taught them to make a high road of the waters very early. There can be no doubt as to HAM'S *own* dwelling-place, as the tabernacles of Ham, and "the land of Ham" are, in Ps. lxxviii., and Ps. cv., names given to EGYPT—a country which lies in reference to the map we have given you, on the left side of the Red Sea.* Ham, like Cain before the Flood, may be well imagined to have gone from his father's presence during his lifetime.

The children of Shem and Japheth, and the great body of their offspring *may* have "journeyed from the East and found a plain in the land of Shinar;"

* Egypt should be looked for on a map of Africa.

but to this nursery of the primeval kingdoms, the land of Shinar, it is certain that there came also Nimrod, the grandson of Ham.

"He began to be a mighty one in the earth. And the beginning of his kingdom was Babel, and Erech, and Accad, and Calneh, in the land of Shinar."

Nimrod is remembered to this day, in that very place, as among the foremost men of the old world, "a mighty hunter"; in him God's promise seems fulfilled:—

"And the fear of you, and the dread of you, shall be upon every beast of the earth."

He is probably the Ninus of whom we read in profane history as the founder of Nineveh. "A mighty hunter" was needed, as the destruction of lions in this reedy and marshy district would seem to have been important, before its occupation by man. Chaldea was a country entirely destitute of stone, and even its wood was scarce and of bad quality, being only that of palm trees, which fringed the rivers; but its early colonists contrived with their *excellent clay*, to raise vast structures which must have provoked comparison with the pyramids of Egypt. "They said one to another, Go to, let us make brick, and burn them thoroughly. And they had brick for stone, and slime had they for mortar."

The children of Ham, from Cush, his noblest son, who peopled Abyssinia, to Canaan his most degraded descendant, who gave his name to that country, afterwards called Palestine, had all surely heard of the *curse* of Noah, that servitude should be the lot of the Hamites; and also of the corresponding blessing on Shem and Japheth. To all the sons was foretold a vast and speedy increase of their race, so that the earth might be replenished with population. They seem to have had a fear of being

scattered abroad on the face of the earth; and as the name of Nimrod signifies, "we will rebel," it appears they resolved to resist *both* prophecies, to which end, perhaps, in the time of Peleg, the son of Eber, "in whose days the earth was divided," those who settled in Chaldea designed the tower of Babel, "whose top, they said, may reach unto heaven; and let us make us a name, lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth."

The Hebrew or Shemite name of "Babel" means "confusion," but in the Hamite language Babel meant "gate of God." The Chaldeans, early and late, have always been famous for their study of the heavenly bodies, shining so brightly over their vast plains in the clear still sky. And one purpose they had in building this tower may have been to observe the stars, but its chief end was, *their own glory*, and the resistance of the curse, and nevertheless "it is written"

> "The LORD did there confound the language of all the earth, and from thence did the LORD scatter them abroad, upon the face of all the earth,"

by an interference from heaven, as marked in its measure as the FLOOD had been a hundred years or more before.

The Scripture says, that the people built a city *and* a tower, and the Birs Nimrud, at Borsip-pa, is most often thought to represent the place of the Tower, which was by no means necessarily *within* the *city* of Babylon.

The Tower is believed to have been rebuilt by Nebuchadnezzar in seven stages, more than 1600 years afterwards. He called it "The Temple of the Seven Spheres." It was a sort of pyramid, whose main top is yet 150 feet high, and whose base, still buried in sand and rubbish, measures a circle of 2000 feet.

The seven stages of this building were brightly colored, the basement stage being black, the second orange, the third bright red, the fourth golden, the fifth pale yellow, the sixth dark blue, and the seventh silver. Nebuchadnezzar, in describing his temples and palaces, often speaks of them as "clothed with gold." When the setting sun lit up this tower in its glory, with the gorgeous light of an Eastern sky, what a vision it must have been! That this ruin has endured when all else around it has crumbled, is thought to be owing to the clay turned into glass of the sixth layer—converted by intense heat into an imperishable mass of blue slag, which has crowned and kept the rest together.

A CLAY TABLET AND ITS ENVELOPE.

M. Oppert, a French Jew, to whom France gives great honour as a reader of the now dead languages of Nineveh and Babylon,—has a most remarkable notice concerning the tower of the Birs Nimrud. The French expedition to Mesopotamia found among the ruins *a clay cake*, dated from Borsip, the 30th day of the sixth month of the sixteenth year of Nabonid. And this clay cake, if M. Oppert's read-

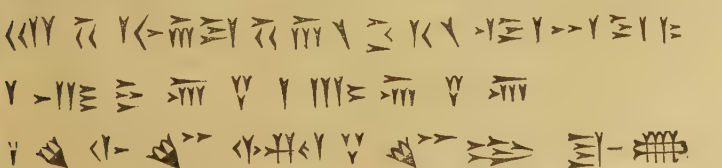
ing be true, declares that this building was raised on the very basement of the Old Tower of Babel.

The Babylonian name Borsip, he says, means "THE TOWER OF THE TONGUES," and thus he reads the tablet.

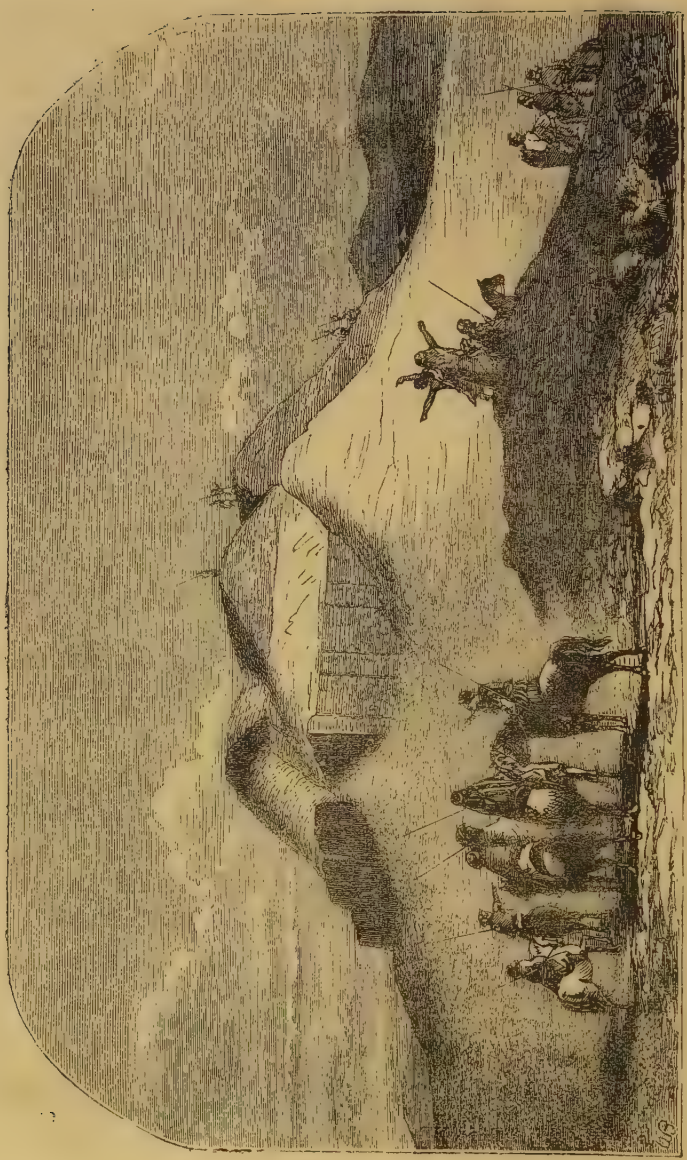
"Nebuchodonosor, king of Babylon, shepherd of peoples, the wise man who lends his ears to the orders of the highest God; . . . the repairer of the Pyramid and the Tower." . . .

"This edifice, the house of the seven lights of the earth, is the most ancient monument of Borsippa: A former king built it (they reckon forty-two ages), but he did not complete its head. SINCE A REMOTE TIME PEOPLE HAD ABANDONED IT, WITHOUT ORDER EXPRESSING THEIR WORDS. Since that time, the earthquake and the thunder had dispersed its sun-dried clay; the bricks of the casing had been split and the earth of the interior had been scattered in heaps. Merodach, the great lord, excited my mind to repair this building. I did not change the site, nor did I take away the foundation-stone. In a fortunate month, an auspicious day, I set my hand to finish it, and to exalt its head. As it had been in former times, so I founded, I made it; as it had been in ancient days, so I exalted its summit."

We cannot tell you that this wonderful reading is *undoubtedly* correct, for if there be still "confusion" in anything, it is amongst the readers of the "cuneiform" or arrowheaded languages of the monuments of Mesopotamia, which are written thus:



THE NAME OF XERXES IN CUNEIFORM. 1. PERSIAN. 2. MEDIAN. 3. ASSYRIAN.



THE TEMPLE OF MUGEYER OR UR.

But one thing is certain, that ancient remains of buildings in those lands exactly verify the descriptions of the Bible. Their temples were erected on solid masses of brickwork, ascended by steps faced with marble, and consisted of a house or chamber highly ornamented, containing an image or shrine.

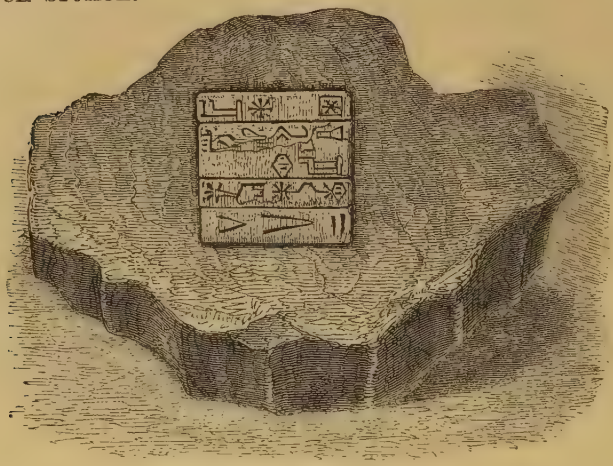
The inner mass of bricks was often composed of the sun-dried squares of clay which they use in Persia even to this day (adding a new chamber to their houses within a week, as the arrival of a guest may require it). This sun-dried mass was faced with kiln dried bricks of small size "burned thoroughly" and laid in bitumen. The name "Mugeyer" means "mother of bitumen." The remains of the temple of Mugeyer we present to you on the opposite page, whose *foundations* are considered to have been laid in Chaldea even before the time of Abraham, in the district inhabited by his father, Terah, "UR of the CHALDEES." See Gen. xi. 31.

In 1854, while excavating this most ancient temple, four cylinders were found inserted at each corner of the upper story—in a niche formed by the omission of a brick. The writing on them tells that this was the Great Temple of the Moon, at Hur, repaired by Nabonidus, the father of Belshazzar, (in an age not far distant from that in which Nebuchadnezzar repaired the Birs Nimrud).

CYLINDER OF NABONIDUS, B.C. 555.

The square bricks of the ancient *foundation*, however, are stamped with certain characters, which Sir Henry Rawlinson reads as URUKH, the first known monarch after Nimrod, and the first of whom any relics have been obtained. His bricks are of coarse and rude make, and often ill-fitted together. His substitute for lime mortar is moist mud or bitumen.

The edges of the specimen brick here given have been broken.



ONE OF URUKH'S BRICKS.

The language of this brick is Hamitic, and it is deciphered as follows:—

"THE SIGNET OF ORCHAMUS OR URUKH, THE PIOUS CHIEF, KING OF UR."

It is as a builder of gigantic works that URUKH is known to us. The basements of his temples are of an enormous size. It is calculated that thirty millions of square bricks have been used in one of them, and it is evident, from the size and number of this king's works, that he had the command of a large amount of human labour. His buildings are carefully placed with their corners pointing North, South, East, and West, and are dedicated to the Sun or Moon, or to Nimrod. Men had begun by that time to worship the heavenly bodies. The learned who believe they read the Hamitic characters place the reign of Urukh at about 2093 before Christ, or 255 years after the flood. This would be in the time of Terah, Abraham's father.

The great hunter Nimrod, and the great builder Urukh, perhaps the Arioch of the Bible, and the great conqueror Chedorlaomer (see Gen. xiv. 1) are the great men you must remember of the first Hamite kingdom. In Urukh's bricks, he also calls himself "king of Accad." (See Genesis x. 10.) The simple statement of the Bible that Nimrod, the grandson of Ham, had the beginning of his kingdom in Babel, is now confirmed by these clay proofs long reserved in the library of the earth for the people of this century to read, who have such peculiar need to hold fast their faith in the inspiration and *accuracy* of the Hebrew Scriptures.

If you ask what is the use of writing about old temples and bricks to Bible-women and Working men, we answer, such relics concern them quite as much as the learned, for this reason, they can go and see these old bricks and remains in the British Museum, and they will fix their attention on a time which we want them to realize in Bible history, the time of the beginning of the first recorded idolatries.

Terah is mentioned as an idolator, in the Book of Joshua (xxiv. 2), where Joshua reminds Israel.—

"Thus saith the Lord God, Your fathers dwelt on the other side of the flood (the Euphrates) in old time, even Terah, the father of Abraham, and they served other gods."

Let us examine what other gods they served. They must have been the gods of Chaldea. The old stamped bricks of Urukh, and the foundation of his temples lately traced, tell of the solid grandeur of Hamitic intentions. The early history of the chief Hamite nations, shews great power to organize wide kingdoms, to acquire worldly greatness, and to check the inroads of wandering tribes. Among the sons of Ham are found the earliest idolators after the Flood; and whether in Egypt or in Chaldea we

find similar ideas. Idolatry was the departure of man from God, and its sources were threefold.

I. Men forgot that their Creator was greater than the works of His hands, so they worshipped first the Heavenly Bodies; from which sin of his early time, Job says, *he* had been kept. See Job xxxi. 26—28:—

"If I beheld the sun when it shined, or the moon walking in brightness;

"And my heart hath been secretly enticed, or my mouth hath kissed my hand. . . . I should have denied the God that is above."

II. They made gods of their fathers, grandfathers, and early kings; and, in Egypt, the children of Ham made offerings to the sun, and named their kings after him: Pharoah from Phra, the sun.

The worship of Noah was, both in Egypt and in Chaldea, strangely united with the worship of the sun. Osiris, the Egyptian sun-god, was a deification of Noah, and he entered into the ark which was symbolized by the crescent moon. Noah was worshipped at "populous No," or Thebes, named from Theba, the ark; in Chaldea he was worshipped at "Erech," or "the place of the ark," as "Anu," or "Ana," or "Oannes," or "Hoa." His most important titles are those which make him "the intelligent fish," the teacher of mankind, one of his emblems is the wedge, or *arrowhead*. Another is a *serpent*, a symbol of superhuman knowledge. The name of Hoa appears on a very ancient stone tablet brought from Mugeyer or Ur. He is represented as a god coming up out of the sea; and as one of the first of the gods, who brought the knowledge of

HOA, OR NOAH.

astronomy and letters to the settlers on the Euphrates and the Tigris.

The men of the first empire of Chaldea, which lasted till the time of Israel's exodus from Egypt, seem to have known how to engrave on stone. A famous traveller, Sir R. Ker Porter, has an engraving in his book of a signet cylinder, of king Urukh's; he once had the signet itself, but lost it. It had four figures clearly cut upon it; a patriarchal father seated on a chair, with the crescent moon over his head; a bridegroom apparently presents to him his bride and her attendant. The figures are as well cut as those of a much later date, and are dressed in flounced and fringed garments delicately striped, and indicating an advanced state of the arts of dress. Think of this as between two and three hundred years after the Deluge! Do you know of the "goodly Babylonish garment" which found its way into Palestine, and made Achan covet its rare beauty (see Josh. vii. 21)? it cost him his life to possess this and other forbidden treasures.

Now, let us look back at the picture of an Assyrian temple palace, which forms our frontispiece. There you see people in striped and flounced dresses—a king with a royal parasol held over him, which is the sign of sovereignty in the East; on the wall is sculptured a king in his war-chariot, like Nimrod hunting the lion; kings also with their great bow in the hand, receiving the homage of captives;—but what else do you see besides these figures of human beings?

Some creatures that are *not* human, with a man's face, and vast stony wings, and a lion's body and feet; also some figures with eagles' faces, and vast wings, and a man's body; and an object which is something like a Tree, and also like a gate.

What can we suppose these to be but memories carried away from Ararat, of the *Cherubim* at the gate of Eden, guarding the "Tree of Life."

III. Here was a third source of idolatry, besides the worship of the heavenly bodies, and the worship of ancestors, fathers, and grandfathers; the making graven images of the supposed forms of the cherubim mentioned in the 3rd chapter of Genesis.

But we now find our attention transferred from CHALDEA to NINEVEH, and must look back to Genesis x. 11.—

"Out of that land (of Shinar) went forth Asshur, and builded Nineveh."

We find no Asshur among Ham's posterity, and yet this interruption occurs in the line of his descendants. It may have been Asshur, the uncle of Nimrod; for the sons of Shem were all his uncles; or, it may be as the Margin reads: "Out of that land he (Nimrod) went forth into Asshur (Assyria) and builded Nineveh." Assyria is the *upper* portion of the Mesopotamian valley, and Chaldea the *lower*, which had Babel for its capital. Both countries compose the tract between the Tigris and Euphrates, or Mesopotamia, which means "the between river country." The Assyrians are always believed to be a Semitic race, not the chosen seed, but still Shem's seed. The men of Assyria grew into great warriors. Sometimes the Chaldeans prevailed, sometimes the Assyrians. At that early time they shared in the same religious ideas, and these old stones from Assyria now bring us proof that the sons of Shem, and Ham also, confided to their children the relics of patriarchal truth, by whose sinful hearts and hands it was soon corrupted and obscured.

There will be much more to say about these images when we arrive at a certain point in the

history of the nation of Israel; but in the presence of these heathen symbols of a most ancient idolatry, it is impossible for a thoughtful observer to avoid asking one question, WHY HAVE THESE BEEN BURIED OUT OF SIGHT IN THE PROVIDENCE OF GOD FOR TWICE TWELVE HUNDRED YEARS, AND WHY ARE THEY RESTORED AT THE END OF SUCH A PERIOD? for it is scarcely thirty years ago since Austen Layard, an English traveller, discovered them in the mounds of Nineveh, and sent them home to take a place in the halls of the British Museum.*

Is it not plain, that their importance consists in their being *heathen likenesses* of the Cherubic forms, which God had chosen as attendants on His own appearances to man, and which He willed *forgotten*.

We should have have had no clue to the meaning of these mysterious stony forms, but for the allusions and descriptions of the Jewish prophets. Ezekiel, in the first and the tenth chapters of his prophecy, describes living creatures "uniting the form of a man, a lion, and an eagle." He saw them in a vision, "and the glory of the God of Israel was over them above"; and he says, "I knew that they were the cherubim." (Ezek. x. 20.)

We cannot doubt that tradition, long after the Fall, described the Eden cherubim, by which the god of this world reaped a harvest in a variety of idols; as all ancient heathen worship proves.

There was one idea that Jehovah always impressed on the minds of the men that loved and feared Him; that of His own PRESENCE with them. They were to act as in the sight of God. They were to ask counsel of Him; and He answered them; His presence was always with them. It was afterwards

*The Museum is open *free* to all, on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, from 10 o'clock till dusk.

visibly manifested to Moses and Aaron, from amid the bright glory which rested over the ARK between *its* cherubim; and as at the gate of Eden we find "cherubim," and a sword-like flame "that turned everyway," (probably between them), we may fairly conclude that these *accompanied* the "presence of the Lord" from which Cain complained of being shut out: "and from thy face I shall be hid." (See Gen. iv. 14.) From this presence probably issued the voice which had pronounced his doom.

To this "presence" belonged worship and sacrifice, and it is a very remarkable thing that, when the children of Asshur attempted to record the story of the past in stone, *they carved as the only object to be worshipped* a symbol of the presence, *not of God*, but of their father, Asshur. They expressed the idea by a winged human figure rising out of a circle. Paganism is only a corruption of patriarchal worship. "Asshur," the supreme god of Assyria, had no shrine or temple of his own, a sign that his worship was universal, and that *all* temples were open to him. When the people had associated this symbol with him, they made it belong to KINGS in general.

ASSYRIAN EMBLEM OF THE PRESENCE OF ASSHUR.

It was their most sacred emblem. If the king is fighting in battle, Asshur, over his head, has his arrow on

the string; if he returns from victory, with his right hand upraised—so is the hand of Asshur—and the disused bow in his left; but most especially when the king *worships*, it is in this "presence," appearing over the emblem of the sacred tree, guarded by its attendant priests, who are represented as winged, and therefore heavenly beings. We regret that you do not, in Mr. Layard's temple picture, see this emblem of the "presence;" but it is given in the following outline of a grand sculpture on the wall, in the first Nineveh gallery of the British Museum.

THE KING OF NINEVEH WORSHIPPING IN THE PRESENCE OF ASSHUR.

Mr. Layard discovered that a slab, as for an altar or throne, with steps up to it, had been let into the wall beneath this sculpture, it had, however, been broken among the ruins.

In no other palace, he says, did he find the emblem of the Presence over the Sacred Tree, which abounded in that earliest temple; and he makes a very remarkable statement, that "on all the slabs forming entrances to it, were marks of a black fluid resembling blood, which appeared to have been daubed on the stone," and called to his mind at once the Hebrew

rite of sprinkling the blood of the Passover Lamb on the lintel of the doorway in Egypt. But was not the idea derived from sacrifices, still older than the time of Moses, the sacrifices of Noah and of Abel? In Assyria the winged priests or Genii, and the winged cherubic beasts, are all the varied multiplication of the same idea. They had all to do with "the Presence," which could not be entered without the offering of blood.

Thus of God's truth men made "a lie." Babel has been *from the beginning* what the Holy Ghost calls her by St. John, in the 17th chapter of the Revelation: "MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH."

The story of these ancient times is *repeated* in the solemn words of the Holy Ghost by the mouth of Paul in the 1st chapter of his Epistle to the Romans:—

"Because that, when they knew God, they glorified *him* not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations and their foolish heart was darkened. . .

"And changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things.

"Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness.

"Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen."

These curious STONE pictures have been surely given of God to England for no less a purpose than to draw the attention of those now living to the truth of past histories in HIS WRITTEN WORD. They are God's galleries of illustration to the first chapters of the world's history. The times of which Moses tells us *before the Bible was written.*

Bible-women and Sunday-school teachers should bring working men and women to behold how God fulfils and confirms His Word.

VALE OF NABLUS, OR SCHECHEM.

THE TIMES BEFORE OUR BIBLE WAS WRITTEN.

THE LIFE OF ABRAHAM.

No. III.

THE life of Abraham, "the friend of God," is embraced in thirteen chapters of the book of Genesis, from the 12th to the 24th, inclusive of the 7 last verses of the 11th chapter, and the first 10 verses of the 25th.

Abraham was at first called "Abram," and the name of "Abram" means, "exalted father." As he is mentioned first in Terah's family, one would think that Abram was the eldest son—but that is *not* the case. Shem had been named before Japheth, and Abram is named before his brothers, on account of dignity. Terah died at the age of 205, when Abram was 75 years old; *therefore*, Abram must have been born when Terah was 130, because 130 and 75 make 205. Yet as Terah had a son when he was 70 (Gen. xi. 26), this son was most probably Haran—who died before his father left Ur of the Chaldees, and whose daughter, Milcah, became the wife of her later born uncle, Nahor. Abram's wife, Sarai, is by some supposed to be Iscah, but from Gen. xx. 12, she would appear to be the daughter of Terah by another wife, and therefore Abram's half-sister.

Abram was born 60 years after Haran, and perhaps Nahor between the two. The marriages

of near relatives appear at that period to have been permitted by God—though afterwards strictly regulated; while marriages with the sons or daughters of idolators seemed especially to have caused "grief of mind" in the patriarchal families, (Gen. xxvi. 35), who must have remembered the evil result of such alliance between the "sons of God," and the "daughters of men" in a former day.

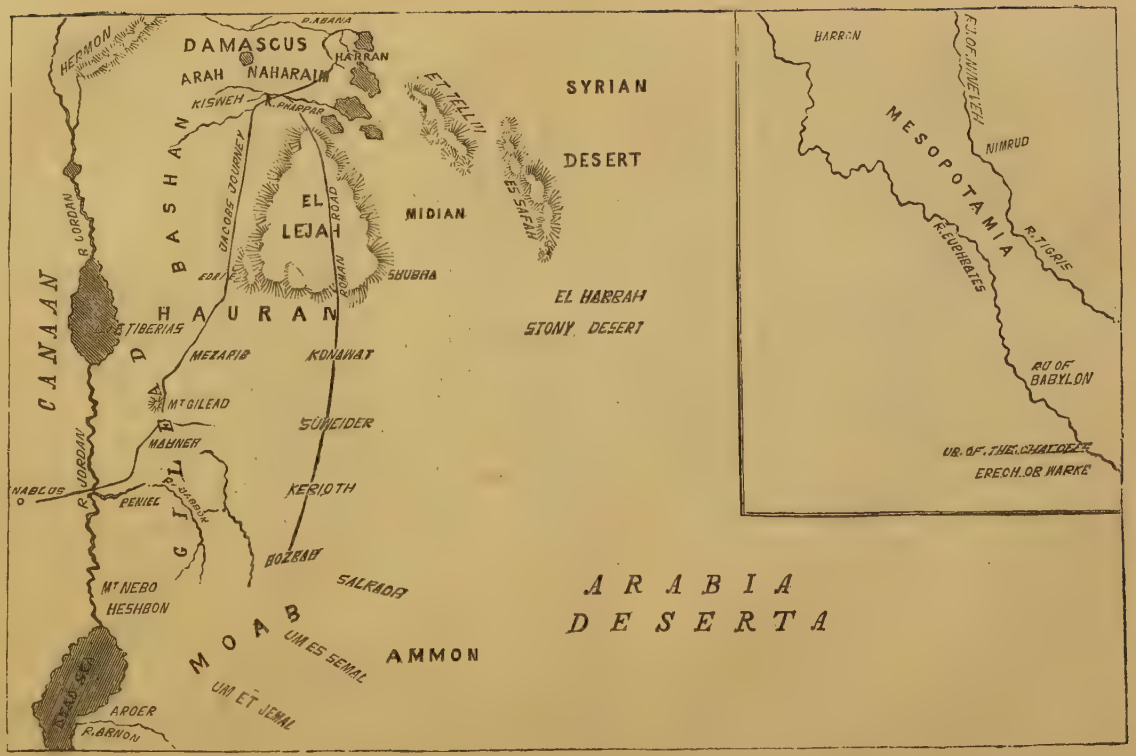
Haran was probably a beloved son, and his name dear to his family, for it is given to the place where Terah first settled after leaving Ur.

In New Testament times,—a man, "full of faith and of the Holy Ghost, called Stephen, gifted with miraculous powers, and speaking with irresistible wisdom (Acts vi. 10), and whose face was "like the face of an angel," tells his countrymen that "the God of glory" (the glory that the sons of God may have seen between the Eden cherubim), appeared unto our father Abraham, when he was in Mesopotamia, *before* he dwelt in Harran. This place Harran, therefore, is *not* in Mesopotamia. Mesopotamia means "the between river country, between the rivers Tigris and Euphrates;" and there *is* a village named Harran, in the north of Mesopotamia, situated east of the Euphrates; but we have, we think, Bible proof that this is not the Haran to which Terah's household gave their family name.

The Lord *had said* to Abram, "*Get thee out* of thy country, and from thy father's house, and *come unto* a land that I will shew thee;" which land is not there named. It is Stephen who tells us that this call came to him *in* Mesopotamia. Another passage or two helps us to ascertain whither he first went. It is of importance to fix on the *right* Haran, because one branch

of the family, Nahor and his descendants, remained there when Abram had gone forth again, and there is a district which *may*, it is thought, have derived its name from Nahor; it is first mentioned in the Hebrew Bible as "Aram-Nahar-aim" (Gen. xxiv. 10), which word ought not to have been translated by the Greek word, Mesopotamia, because this has alike confused the history, not only of Abraham, but that of Isaac and Jacob. Aram-Nahar-aim means "*high* land between rivers;" and these rivers, Dr. Beke, who has recently explored the district, considers for many reasons likely to have been the Scriptural Abana and Pharpar (or the Barada and Awaj), "rivers of Damascus."

We perceive that Abram *must* have lived *long* in Haran, and probably near Damascus, Josephus, the great historian of the Jews, repeats the tradition that he was *king* of Damascus. When he and Lot departed thence into Canaan, it was with "all their substance that they had gathered, and the souls that they had gotten in Haran (Gen. xii. 5), and when Lot two or three years after is taken prisoner by Chaldean and Persian kings, Abram arms his 318 trained servants "born in his house," and pursues the plunderers to Dan. After that, when in Gen. xv. God says to Abram, "I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward," the patriarch answers, "Lord God, to me thou hast given no seed, and lo, one born in mine house is mine heir." The previous verse explains that this is "the steward of his house, Eliezer of Damascus," who must have been from twenty to twenty-five years old, to have been placed in such a post of trust, and born at Damascus, which seems to verify the report of Josephus, and also implies that Terah left Chaldea a long while before his death.


R. ABANA
DAMASCUS
HARRAN
ARAH NAHARAIM
HERMON
KISNEH
PHARPAR
SYRIAN
DESERT
ET TELL H
ES SAFAH
JACOBS JOURNEY
EL LEJAH
MIDIAN
BASHAN
R. JORDAN
EDR
SHUBHA
EL HARRAH
STONY DESERT
CANAAN
HAURAN
TIBERIAS
MEZARIB
KONAWAT
MT GILEAD
SUWEIDER
MAHNEH
NABLOS
R. JORDAN
PENIEL
R. JABBOK
GILEAD
KERIOTH
BOZRAH
SALKHAD
MT NEBO
HESHBON
MOAB
UM ES SEMAL
AMMON
ARABIA
DESERTA
DEAD SEA
AROER
R. ARNON
UM ET JEMAL
BARRAN
R. OF HABOR
NIMRUD
MESOPOTAMIA
R. TIGRIS
R. EUPHRATES
RU OF BABYLON
UR OF THE CHALDEES
ERECH OR WARKE

We are not told that Nahor, Terah's second son, came out of Chaldea to Syria, with his kindred; but he, or his, *came afterwards*, for his son Bethuel and his grandson Laban are both called Syrians (Gen. xxviii. 5), not *Ass*yrians.

Israel, as a people, are afterwards taught by Moses to say: "A Syrian ready to perish was my father"—which may refer to either Abram or Jacob, when, pressed by famine, they were driven to go down into the land of Egypt.

On the map given at page 14 you may observe Palestine (or Canaan) and Syria in their relation to Chaldea; but *on the present outline map*, on a somewhat larger scale, you may see Damascus, the most ancient and important city of Syria. It is perhaps the very oldest city in the world, still inhabited; and has a story that spreads over thousands of years. "It sits as when its rivers, Abana and Pharpar, were known to Naaman; as when it burst on the view of Saul of Tarsus, throned amid its gardens on the edge of the desert. The spot has never been desolate since Aram, the youngest son of Shem, arrived with his flocks from the Euphrates, and pitched his tents beside its crystal waters."

This map is to introduce you to the land of *Eastern* Palestine, which only of late years may be said to have been *re*-discovered by modern travellers. The district has been long hidden from the eyes of the Western nations; all access to its rocky hiding-places and old stone cities being forbidden by the Druses and the Arabs, the children of Moab and of Ishmael.

But we need this map now, to illustrate the *early* history of Abraham, and shall have often to refer to it again, while telling the story of his children. Its first use will be to show the migra-

tion of Abram and Lot, and their large households, from Haran to Sichem, and then to Bethel, on the other side of Jordan. "Unto Canaan they came, passing through the place of Sichem, unto the plain of Moreh." The city of Sichem, perhaps, was not then in existence, but the oaks of Moreh were there, if the town as yet was not. In modern times Sichem is called Nablus, and has been visited by our Prince of Wales.

The word Moreh means "appearance of Jehovah;" and here, it is written, "the Lord appeared unto Abram, and said to him, To thy seed will I give this land;" and this although the Canaanite was yet in the land. (See Gen. xii. 6, 7.)

Abram builds an altar (of course for sacrifice), in remembrance of this Divine Appearance; and he also builds one at his next resting-place, Bethel, "calling upon the name of the Lord." To this altar he returns, after a journey into Egypt, and again he is enjoined to explore the country; next time he pitches his tents on the plains of Mamre or in Hebron; and once more he builds an altar. We are now made acquainted with Abram as indeed "an exalted father," lifted up into fellowship with Jehovah, whom it pleases in this man to elect a RACE, that shall witness for His name in the world. Abraham was to become "THE FRIEND OF GOD." The Arabs still know him by that name, "El-khalil-Allah;" the apostle James so calls him (James ii. 23). We find it written in Isaiah xli. 8; "But thou, Israel, art my servant, Jacob whom I have chosen, the seed of Abraham my friend"; and Jehoshaphat appeals to God (2 Chron. xx. 7), "Thou gavest this land to the seed of Abraham, thy friend for ever."

It is not for us to look to any quality in the

human creature that called forth this divine love; but what God had designed to be, in the manifestation of Himself to Adam in his innocent estate, it is evident He now of His own free grace, makes Himself to Abraham.

Tempted to doubt by the serpent,—Eve, and then Adam, had *not* believed God's Word to them, and had ventured to disobey His one Divine warning; but it is written (Gen. xv. 6), "Abram believed in the Lord, and He counted it unto him for righteousness." He had the simple faith of a little child in what God had said and done, and declared He meant to do. He distinguished "the God of glory" from all the inventions and devices of Chaldean imagination. He worshipped neither Noah nor Nimrod, and amid all the seductions and growing luxuries of his Hamitic neighbours, he gave his heart to "the most High God." He "reposed as a child in the strength of God (such is considered to be the force of the original Hebrew); and thus he became (Rom. iv. 11) "the father of all them that believe."

It is not told us how long before his 75th year Abram had actually obeyed God's command to come up out of Mesopotamia. He was to leave his kindred and his father's house—and he did leave his brother Nahor, and probably other relatives. But the migration is described as the father's, according to patriarchal custom; and no further revealing of God's will comes to the son till after the father's death. Then Abram sees a further separation commanded. "He departed as the Lord had spoken to him" from the Syrians, as before from the *Ass*yrians; and sets forward with Lot for Canaan itself, the land beyond the Jordan,

and south of Syria, bordering on the Mediterranean Sea.

The promises of God to Abram, which *were seven times repeated*, extend over a period of certainly 50, and perhaps 75 years of his life, reckoning from the departure into Haran to the offering of Isaac. If, as Josephus says, the age of Isaac was about 25 at the time of the sacrifice, then Abram must have been 125. If also, as we have supposed, Eliezer of Damascus, Abram's steward, and born in his house, was scarcely less than 25 when Abram speaks of him as probably his only heir—the coming up from Mesopotamia must have preceded Eliezer's birth, and the first call of God must have come to Abram in Mesopotamia, when his own age was about 50.

We should endeavour to obtain a clear idea of the seven forms of the promise made to Abram.

If seven persons are studying the history together, they should be read, one after another, from the following chapters of Genesis.

The first being made in Mesopotamia—
Gen. chap. xii., vers. 1—3; Acts vii. 3.
The second at Sichem—
chap. xii., ver. 7.
The third at Bethel—
chap. xiii., vers. 14—17.
The fourth at Mamre, if not on Gerizim—
in the whole of chap. xv.
The fifth at Mamre—the same as Hebron—
chap. xvii., vers. 1—22.
The sixth at Mamre—
chap. xviii., vers. 17, 18, 19.
The seventh either on Mount Moriah or Mount Gerizim—
chap. xxii., vers. 15—18.

The first is a personal blessing on Abram himself; but it includes the promise,—

"In thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed."

The second is short and specific,—

"To thy seed will I give this land."

The third makes the seed numberless, like the dust of the earth, and the gift of the land "FOR EVER."

The fourth reveals the personal heir, and compares the seed in number to the stars. At this time also is foretold their bondage of 400 years, and their future return to their land. And this fourth promise (in chap. xv.) defines the extent of the land—even from the Nile to the Euphrates.

At the time of the fifth promise (in chap. xvii.) Abram is called Abraham—not only "exalted father," but "father of many nations;" and *the Covenant is established*, concerning both the seed and the land, for ever; circumcision being its seal. Sarai becomes Sarah, or Princess, and is to be a "mother of kings." The promised heir is to be named Isaac; and the prayer for Ishmael is also heard.

(There are three promises that *he* shall be a great nation, unnumbered for multitude, and shall dwell in the presence of all his brethren. The *three* promises concerning Ishmael are found in Genesis xvi. 10, 12; xvii. 20; xxi. 13—21.)

The sixth promise concerning Abraham is in chap. xviii. 17—19; and here the blessing on *all nations* for his sake is repeated; while God declares His knowledge of Abraham, that He will command his household after him.

The seventh sums up all the previous promises once more, and confirms them with an oath; and God swears by Himself, that as Abraham has not

withheld his only son at the Divine command, but "obeyed the voice of God," as the stars of heaven, and as the sand on the sea-shore, shall his seed be, possessing the gate of their enemies; and in them all nations shall be blessed. The promise of blessing to all nations is repeated *three* times.

At Sichem Abram receives his title deed to the Land of Canaan. It is a spot that the shifting scenes of many ages have made memorable. Probably as Jacob did afterwards, Abram descended to it from the heights of Gilead with his flocks, through the deep rent of the valley of the Jabbok, and advanced, after fording the Jordan, towards that wide and beautiful plain which has since been described as presenting one sea of golden grain, unbroken by hedge or bound.

The patriarch's face is set westward, and he leads his flocks and herds to enjoy the abundant rills and watercourses, and rest amid the grateful shade of Moreh's oaks and olives which lie between the ridges of Gerizim and Ebal.

All travellers naturally press towards the highest point in a landscape; and it is quite as probable that Abram built his altar on the mountain as in the plain. The heathen always "served their gods on the mountains and the hills (Deut. xii. 1—3); and where their altars were destroyed by God's command, the altars of the Lord of heaven and earth would be erected in their stead.

There were then but two abodes of settled life in Canaan—its oldest city, Arba (Hebron), the "city of the four giants;" the other, the circle of the five cities in the vale of the Jordan—Sodom and Gomorrah, Admah, Zeboim, and Zoar. The warlike Amorite chiefs, Mamre and his two brothers, were

camped along the mountain tops, and also the giant Rephaim.

The height of Gerizim above the neighbouring hills is so great as to deserve the supremacy which Josephus gives it, "The highest of all the mountains of Samaria." From the smooth sheet of rock on its summit, with the cave beside it, still existent, Abram would embrace a view of the Mediterranean Sea on the west—he might even see the white sails—the snowy heights of Hermon on the north, and on the east the far-off wall of mountains beyond the Jordan, while the lovely expanse of the plain lay stretched as a carpet of many colours beneath his feet.

It is worthy of remark that Gerizim, or its immediate neighbourhood, has been the seat of primitive worship from that hour to this. It has been "a holy place" to Israel, or one so called, for nearly 4000 years.

There are many reasons for supposing that three or four wondrous scenes in Abram's life took place on this mountain. There is no notice in Genesis of the "appearance" of God to man before His appearance to Abram. We have heard already of "the presence of the Lord," "the voice of the Lord," and of many Divine acts and deeds, but not of an "appearance of the Lord," before the appearance at Sichem. The altar and the sacrifice, as we have seen, belonged, in those days, to the "presence," and now it belongs to the "appearance" of God, whether in the assumed form of man or angel. We observe that Abram builds an altar wherever he goes, for the Presence of God goes with him; but we no longer hear of it as as marked by the attendance of cherubim, for Jehovah reveals Himself in a less awful form.

There is something very surprising and mysterious in the first meeting of Melchisedek with the favored patriarch, and in the after references to him in the vi. & vii. ch. Hebrews. A "priest of the most high God," and yet apparently a dweller in Canaan, he crosses, for a moment, Abram's path, and is recognised, without question, as a person of higher spiritual rank than him whom he comes forth to bless. He bears titles which the children of Abram in after ages would associate only with their own Messiah—"King of righteousness and Prince of peace" (these St. Paul points out to us); and he brings forth bread and wine, which recall to the mind of Christians the elements now used in the Lord's Supper.

We hear no more of Melchisedek in the Scriptures till after 800 years. David speaks of him in a Psalm (cx. 4) as a prophetic type of his coming Lord—and 1200 years after that, the Hebrew Christians are taught to look to Melchisedek (Heb. vi. vii.) as a proof that it was the consistent purpose of God to abolish the Levitical priesthood.

It cannot be certainly settled who Melchisedek was; for the Apostle does not inform us. The Jewish traditions pronounce that he was the patriarch Shem, who survived the Deluge 500 years; and this meeting might have happened seventy years before his death. He was the natural lord of Canaan, in which Ham's children were only intruders, and was best entitled, by the dignity of age, to convey his right to Abram.

Shem lived on, beyond the marriage of Isaac, and to within twenty-seven years of Abram's death. He must have seen Arphaxad, Salah, Peleg, Reu, Serug, Nahor, and Terah, with their generations, die out; and must have seemed to them indeed to have neither "beginning of days" (in their dispensation)

"nor end of life." At the same time, the words in Hebrews vii. 3, "without father, without mother, without pedigree," cannot apply to Shem; therefore the question must be left undecided.

There are good authorities for the modern opinion that the meeting with the "King of Salem" (Gen. xiv. 18) occurred on Gerizim, and that to Melchisedek, as the royal guardian and master of the most ancient and conspicuous sanctuary of Palestine, Abraham paid the tenth of his lately acquired spoils. There is a village called Salem, very near to Gerizim, expressly mentioned in the history of Jacob (Gen. xxxiii. 18), and which re-appears in the New Testament, in the history of the Baptist. (John iii. 23.)

The great Jeru-salem only became a place of importance in Jewish history in the time of David; and there is no hint in Scripture that marks any sacredness attached to that place (which in early times was called Jebus) until the vision of David. (1 Chron. xxi. 16.)

Shechem, on the other hand, was for 400 years selected as the metropolis of the country; and Moses definitely directs that on Gerizim and Ebal, the law shall be read to the people (Deut. xi. 29, 30); which brings us to the *third* scene in Abram's life, most probably occurring on Mount Gerizim; because it was said to him of his seed, "In the fourth generation they shall come hither again;" and hither by the order of Moses they came.

It seems to be immediately after the slaughter of the kings, and Abram's noble refusal to be enriched by the transaction, that God in vision says to him,—

"Fear not Abram, I am thy shield and thine exceeding great reward." Gen. iv.

On this occasion special sacrifice is enjoined and

defined by God; the slain and dedicated victims representing the offerer. A prophetic horror of the bondage passes before Abram in his slumber; but the sacrifice is consumed and accepted; and in the same day the COVENANT of the land is made with Abram, which in its fulness, is not yet fulfilled—that from the Nile to the Euphrates, unto his seed shall be given the land of Palestine both east and west.

There is a reason given for its suspension in Jeremiah xxxiv. 18, 19, 20:—

"I will make you to be removed into all the kingdoms of the earth.

"And I will give the men that have transgressed my covenant, which have not performed the words of the covenant which they had made before me when they cut the calf in twain, and passed between the parts thereof,

"The princes of Judah, and the princes of Jerusalem, the eunuchs, and the priests, and all the people of the land, which passed between the parts of the calf;

"I will even give them into the hand of their enemies, and into the hand of them that seek their life: and their dead bodies shall be for meat unto the fowls of the heaven, and to the beasts of the earth."

And meanwhile the Holy Ghost tells us by St. Paul in his Epistle to the Galatians:—

"Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ.

"And this I say, that the covenant, that was confirmed before of God *in Christ*, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect.

"For if the inheritance be of the law, it is no more of promise; but God gave it to Abraham by promise.

"Wherefore then serveth the law? It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made; and it was ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator."

To this incident of the past therefore our Lord

alludes, when He says, "Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day, he saw it and was glad."

It must have been the spiritual sight of the Jehovah of the Old Testament, who is the Christ of the New, that was given to Abram with the covenant on Gerizim, which must have rendered possible to his faith, the after sacrifice of Isaac.

Between the vision and the "coming again of the people to Gerizim, intervened, as we know, the birth of Ishmael and of Isaac, and the offering up of Isaac himself for sacrifice, probably about forty years after the time of the vision. It is on the tradition and authority of Josephus, rather than on any statement of the Scriptures, that the scene of Isaac's offering has been transferred, in popular belief, to Mount Moriah, one of the hills of Jerusalem. Yet when the destroying angel stayed his hand at the threshing-floor of Araunah the Jebusite (2 Sam. xxiv. 16) there is no allusion made to any previous act of the Lord's mercy shown in that locality; and neither at the building or at the dedication of Solomon's Temple on the same spot, when the glory of the Lord filled the house, are we ever reminded that He had already sanctified it by any previous appearance to Abraham or salvation to Isaac; the narrative merely goes back to the lesser event of staying the plague at the threshing-floor of Araunah.

The reference in Amos vii. 9, confirms the idea that these hills of Samaria were the "*high places of Isaac*," which were to become "desolate;" the sanctuary of Israel which was to be "laid waste;" the house of Jeroboam which was to be "given to the sword."

"Our fathers worshipped in this mountain," said the woman of Samaria to our Saviour, when He came to Sychar, in the days of His flesh; and although

He answered her in an era when the prophecy of Amos had been long fulfilled,—"Ye worship ye know not what, the hour cometh when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father,"—the reply recognized the *two* high places of the chosen people, of which Gerizim stood *first* in venerated antiquity and in order of time. "When Isaac was to be offered, Abraham was in the land of the Philistines. From Beersheba, or Gaza, the southern point of Palestine, he would move along the plain, and on the morning of the third day would arrive in Sharon, where the massive height of Gerizim is visible 'afar off;' see Gen. xxii.; and from thence half a day would bring him to its summit, whereas Mount Moriah, at Jerusalem, is not visible till the traveller is close upon it."

There were other after scenes at Shechem.

The locality thus sacred in the lives of Abraham and Isaac, was not less so to Jacob. He, too, pitched his tent, and built his altar in Shechem, and when he left it in sorrow for the violence of his sons, and put away from his household their strange gods, and went up to Bethel, he hid their idols and their ear-rings under "the Oak of Shechem."

It was at Shechem the cruel brethren sold their father's favourite, Joseph, to the Ishmaelites going down to Egypt with balm and spicery (the first caravan we hear of in Scripture), and so led their own way into the land of bondage. It was to Shechem and Gerizim that they came again in the fourth generation, according to the vision of their great forefather, bringing Joseph's bones, which they had carried with them, by his desire, through all their forty years of desert wandering (Gen. l. 25); and they buried them in Shechem, in the in-

heritance of the children of Joseph (Josh. xxiv. 32). "At the mouth of the Valley of Shechem two slight breaks are visible, in the midst of the vast plain of corn—one a white Mussulman chapel, the other a few fragments of stone; the first covers the alleged tomb of Joseph, Ishmael's mark of present triumph over Isaac's exiled race; the other, THE WELL, choked up by ruins, but still the well of 'our father Jacob.'"

But we have limited ourselves to the history of Abraham in this period, and must return with him to BETHEL, where he pitched his tent after his first visit to Sichem; and whence, pressed by famine, he departed for Egypt; where there dwelt already a Pharaoh and his princes, known apparently to Abram as despotic lords, and likely to kill him, that they might seize on his beautiful wife.

His faith in God is not here in exercise, and he thinks to save himself by entreating her to say she is his sister, telling only a part of the truth. This was sadly short-sighted, as all cowardly shifts and evasions are, and proves, alas! that his life seemed dearer to him than his wife; but the Lord observes the strait he is in, and interferes to restore Sarah to him unharmed.

Lot had gone with him into Egypt, and they both return as rich men "of great substance, so that they could not dwell together." Abram pays a second visit to Bethel, to the place of his second altar, and calls on the name of the Lord.

He then most unselfishly offers Lot, who had no claim to it, his choice of hill and plain—to the right or left—resolving to be content with whatever remained. The choice of Lot was not unselfish, and he passed over in his judgment the exceeding wickedness of the cities of the plain. He saw

Jordan far below, and thought of water for his flocks in its wide and fertile valley; he saw the vine, the olive, and the figs, which dressed its rich ravines; he thought it like "the garden of the Lord," and like Egypt, whose fertile Nile was fresh in his recollection; and without a question whether Abram too might not prefer it, to whom the whole land was given, he pitches his tent at once toward Sodom, and leaves Abram alone with his best Friend.

Bethel lay in the direct thoroughfare of Palestine, over the grey hills which rise in a mass 3,000 feet above the Jordan valley, and also above the Mediterranean Sea. The long green lowland strip of Phœnicia borders that sea, and the broad plain of Jezreel, or Esdraelon, twelve miles wide, breaks the grey ridge in the midst of the land, and divides the hills of Northern and Southern Palestine.

The whole length of the land from Dan to Beersheba is 180 miles; not quite so far as from London to York; while its breadth from the Jordan to the Mediterranean is scarcely fifty miles,—rather less than from London to Brighton.

A traveller may pass easily from Jerusalem to Schechem, even in a short winter's day, although along a troublesome stony road.

The site of Bethel seems to have been fairly ascertained: "It is the highest of a succession of eminences,—each brow marked by some ruins of ancient buildings — the one highest hill which seems to rest upon the rocky slopes below, and is even now distinguished by an olive grove that clusters over its summit. Here only could the Lord have said to Abram, "Look from the place where thou art, northward, and southward, and eastward,

and westward;" and "walk through the land in the length of it, and in the breadth of it; for I will give it unto thee."

These bleak hills were to be the site of cities whose honoured names would be remembered when the very ruins of those in the garden of the Jordan would be swept away.

There is scarcely any other river like the Jordan. Its name means "the Descender," and it does descend from the mountain of Lebanon, down the deep fissure it makes through the mountains of Eastern and Western Palestine, rapidly for 300 feet into the sea of Galilee.

Again, it plunges through twenty-seven rapids, and by a fall of 1000 feet, into the Dead Sea, the grave of Lot's chosen cities, from whence it emerges no more.

"Hear my prayer O Lord," says David, "for I am a stranger with thee and a sojourner, as all my fathers were" (Ps. xxxix. 12). Abram began his pilgrim life by the call of God; and although he was greatly blessed and enriched, so that the children of Heth address him as a "mighty prince," he has to buy his sepulchre of *them* in his own promised land. In the cave of Machpelah, in the field of Ephron, "his purchased possession," he buries Sarah, and is himself also laid in peace according to God's promise: "An old man and full of years he is gathered to his people." One would conclude these must be "the people of God" gone home to their Father's house—Adam and Seth, Enoch and Noah, and all other unmentioned saints who had lived and died in His faith and fear.

We are told (Heb. vi. 15) that after Abraham had patiently endured, he obtained the promise. Our Lord Himself speaks of him as "sitting down

in the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. viii. 11); and in Isa. xxix. 22, "Thus saith the Lord who *redeemed* Abraham." Remembered through all time as "faithful Abraham," he is held up for ever to all living as "*the friend of God*," "who against hope believed in hope." A contrast to the children of doubt, and alas! to our first parents, who listened to Satan's first temptation—"Hath God said?"

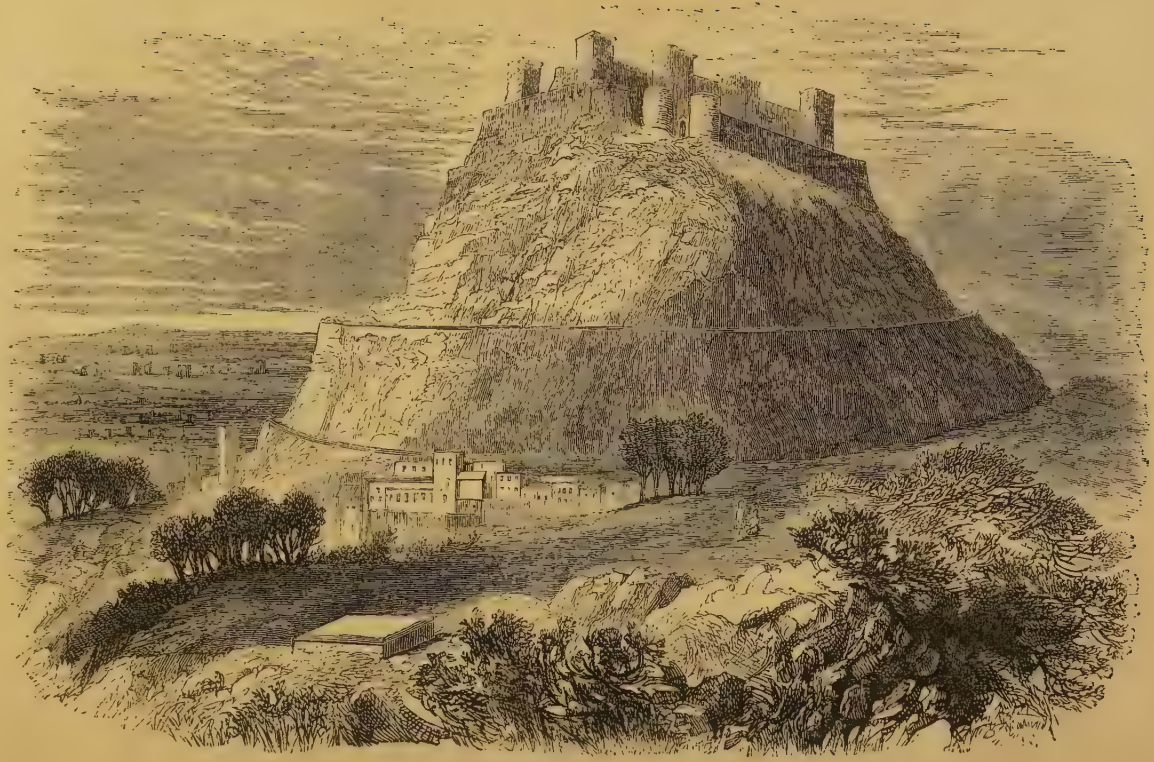
How beautiful is the character sketched in these thirteen chapters! Yet we cannot say how faultless! for, like Job's patience, even Abraham's faith could sometimes fail; but his sins are covered. With Sarah, he "died in faith, not having received the promises; but having seen them afar off, they were persuaded of them and embraced them."

The promise was very early fulfilled that he should be a father of *many* nations (Gen. xvii. 5). His *unchosen* sons, Ishmael, and those borne to him in the last thirty years of his life by his second wife Keturah, multiplied much more rapidly than the posterity of Isaac; and their descendants and Lot's still hold the land of Eastern Palestine. He sent them away from Isaac while he yet lived, "eastward unto the east country," which means the desert east of the land of Bashan and Gilead, extending to the river Euphrates.

For the conquest of the Hagarites by the Reubenites, see 1 Chron. v., in which it is said that "the war was of God." Abraham's descendants are—

I. The Israelites, through Isaac and Jacob.
II. The Arabs—through Ishmael.
III. "The Children of the East"—of whom the Midianites and the Hagarites were chief.

It is very striking that Abraham's own first, and only actual possession in the Land of Promise, was a Tomb. The Cave of Machpelah lies now beneath the Mosque of Hebron.



THE CASTLE OF SALKHAD.

THE TIMES BEFORE THE PENTATEUCH WAS WRITTEN.

ARABIA AND THE PATRIARCH JOB.

No. IV.

"The mingled people that dwell in the desert."

It cannot be certainly proved whether the times of the patriarch Job were before or after Abraham, but we may surely conclude that he lived within the limit defined by St. Paul in Romans v. as "from Adam to Moses," and that his country was either Syria or Northern Arabia.

The Arabians are called in Scripture "the mingled people that dwell in the desert" (Jer. xxv. 24). Our readers should now refer to the map of Arabia, given p. 14, to form some idea of that great country, almost a continent in itself, whose western length along the Red Sea is 1400 miles; along the Indian Ocean to the south it is 1200 miles; while the great isthmus joining it to Asia, from Syria to Chaldea, is 900 miles across.

Arabia belongs to Asia, but it has often been called "Africa in little." It has a small repetition of its mighty self at its north-west corner, which is called Arabia Petrea, or the *stony* Arabia; and in that portion of it the children of Israel wandered forty years before their entrance to their promised land of Palestine on the north.

If you now look again at the enlarged map of the northern portion of Arabia given in p. 44, you will find the second division of Arabia—called *Deserta*—on the south of Eastern Palestine. The tract of Chaldea does not really come within that map at all, but is inserted to shew the relative direction from which Abram came. Arabia Deserta is a high plain, stretching far and wide, under a burning cloudless sky, where no showers temper the heat, and where none could live but for the cool winds and dews of night. You will find such a country described in the short 35th chapter of Isaiah, as "the wilderness and the solitary place," the "parched ground" where pools and streams and springs would truly call forth songs of praise; and these are promised, "when the ransomed of the Lord return and come to Zion," with everlasting joy upon their heads, and when their "sorrow and sighing shall flee away."

But those days are not yet arrived. By day the winds still raise intolerable clouds of fine dust. There is not a single navigable river in all Arabia, and very few streams as yet find their way to the sea. The country is watered, if at all, by *wadis*—*i.e.*, channels of land depressed a few feet below the surrounding level, down which, in the rainy season, run rills or brooks, which are so picturesquely used by Job as an image of the pity he expected from his friends (Job. vi. 15—18) and *found not.*

"My brethren have dealt deceitfully as a brook, and as the stream of brooks they pass away. . . . What time they wax warm they vanish: when it is hot they are consumed out of their place. . . . They go to nothing and perish."

From Arabia *the Stony*, however, and Arabia *the Desert*, you can pass southwards to the great tract of Arabia Felix, or *the Happy*, where arid deserts alter-

nate with grander green oases, or wide spots of verdure and fertility, far wider than we had been used to conceive before the modern traveller, Mr. Palgrave, had in 1862 penetrated to Arabia's inner heart.

His way through the desert he describes as "level, monotonous, desolate," absolutely dry, where you chew dry dates and cinder-cake as you plod along through the wilds which defy all attempts of man to reclaim or change them, threading the great desert ring which encircles central Arabia and renders communication so difficult between it and the outside lands of Syria and Persia.

The inner portion of Arabia is a vast and mountainous table land, called by the name of the Upper and the Lower Nejd. Long has that name been written on the maps, while nothing more was known of this centre of ancient civilization. The outer edge of the sandy ring is girt by a line of mountains, low and sterile in general, but on the south, in Yemen and Oman, expanding into high, and broad, and fertile regions, beyond which lies a narrow rim of coast land, bordered by the sea.

The Arabs call their deserts "Nafood"—"the swellings of Nafood;" and when the traveller is among those enormous ridges of red, loose sand, each ridge two or three hundred feet in height, all furrowed by the capricious gales in the depths between, he feels as if hemmed in by burning walls; when each slope is ascended, he overlooks what seems a vast sea of fire, ruffled into little red-hot waves; the sun strikes blazing down, till clothes, baggage, housings, all take the smell of burning, and scarce permit the touch.

Such is the land of the "mingled people." None could live in it, but for its oases. At the edge of

such a sand ocean, two or three sparrows will begin to twitter under a low shrub by the wayside, and the spent traveller will weep for very joy; perhaps twenty-four hours afterwards he will come across a pretty village, and be able to quench his thirst with fresh grapes.

THE ARAB SHEIKH.

If we wish to understand the first peopling of Arabia, we must go back to the table of long-lived men after the Flood, that we may find the patriarch Eber. He is mentioned in the Bible (Gen. x. 24, 25): "And Salah begat Eber. And unto Eber were born two sons: the name of one was Peleg; for in his days was the earth divided; and his brother's name was Joktan." It seems as if Eber had been scarcely enough noticed in patriarchal story. His is the longest life after the Flood (464 years), except Shem's (which was 500 years); he survives Shem, who was his great-grandfather, for thirty-one years, and he was the ancestor of the first stock of the Arab nations.

It is impossible to study the Bible without

observing the importance attached to the number *seven* in the history of Israel. Now Eber stands out in the new world as *seventh* from Enoch, who, we are told, was "*seventh* from Adam," and sees Isaac born, "the child of promise," who was *seventh* from himself.

In the days of Eber's son Peleg, came "division;" in the days of Abraham, "choice." *Eber sees both.* He sees the birth of the three ancestors of the Arabs—"the mingled people,"—JOKTAN, and ISHMAEL, and ESAU, the three *un*chosen sons of three fathers—Eber, Abram, and Isaac, who had all besides a *chosen* son in Peleg, Isaac, and Jacob, in whom the lineal succession was to be continued, from which the Messiah at last would spring. Eber probably outlived his own son Joktan, and is found on the earth ninety-three years with Ishmael, and nineteen with Esau.

We here perceive the beginning of the Arabian three-fold cord which runs on beside all the long lines of earth's history. Joktan is born about 100 years after the Flood; Ishmael not till 338 years after Joktan, and Esau 74 years later than Ishmael; and the descendants of each are yet known as inhabiting Arabia. Joktan had thirteen sons (Gen. x.), many of whose names are still preserved in those of existing Arab tribes. Their settlements are mentioned in the Bible, and the last one named is a Jobab, who *may* possibly have been the patriarch Job:—

"And Joktan begat Almodad, and Sheleph, and Hazermaveth, and Jerah.

"And Hadoram, and Uzal, and Diklah.

"And Obal, and Abimael, and Sheba.

"And Ophir, and Havilah, and Jobab: all these were the sons of Joktan.

"Their dwelling was from Mesha as thou goest unto Sephar, a mount of the East." (Gen. x. 26—30.)

The situation of Mesha has never been made out, but Sephar is believed to be Zafari, the sea port of the country of Yemen, on the south-west of Arabia. Yemen extends two or three hundred miles along the shore of the Indian Ocean, and is the country of spice and frankincense. The sons of Joktan may have reached it by going down the Red Sea, and then pressing towards the east.

There are still, at this distance of time, relics of their names in the south of Arabia. Hadramaut, for Hazar-Maveth; Azal, for Uzal; Seba, for Sheba; and the *genuine* Arabs, as they are called, all trace their descent to Joktan, whom they call Kahtan. The Arabian writers speak of the children of Ishmael as the "*adopted*" Arabs; but these it will be seen could only have colonized Arabia 400 years or more *after* the *genuine* Joktanites. Mesha may possibly mean Es-Sham, the ancient name for Damascus, and from Mesha to Sephar in Arabia, may have been a similar expression to that of "from Dan to Beersheba" in Palestine, meaning from north to south; for this was doubtless at first the range of the dwellings of the Joktanites; and as no trace of Jobab, the youngest son, has been discovered among the Arab names of places or tribes in *South* Arabia, this youngest son may have dwelt in the *northern* region of Aram Naharaim, the high land between the rivers near Damascus. The patriarch Job dwelt in the land of Uz; and Dr. Beke says that that district was called the land of Ghuth, or Uz.

It was to the land of Midian that Moses fled from Pharaoh, and there he dwelt with Jethro, although he led his father-in-law's flocks to the backside of the desert to Horeb. In Midian, from its neighbourhood to the land of Ghuth, or Uz, Moses may have heard of Job's history recorded by himself, and added

to it by inspiration, its introduction and its close. Moses was born 777 years after the Flood, and died at the age of 120—897 years after it. The era of Job may possibly have been 200 years before Abraham. His knowledge of God seems to place him of necessity very near to the age of the early patriarchs. Eliphaz mentions as alive at that era, *men much older* than Job's father; and the inspired Elihu is said to be of the kindred of Ram, or Aram.

The first person named "Uz" in the Bible is the son of Aram, and grandson of Shem; the second is the son of Nahor by Milcah, Isaac's cousin (Gen. xxii. 21); the third is a grandson of Seir the Horite. (Gen. xxxvi. 28.)

The Horites seem to have early inhabited Mount Seir, a hilly range which lies south of the Dead Sea, and these were probably children of Ham, and allied to the Emims and Rephaim, with whom they are named, as conquered in Abraham's day by the Chaldean kings (Gen. xiv. 6); they were vanquished again a second time by the children of Esau (Deut. ii. 12—22); so that it might be said alike of Edom and of Canaan:—

"For they of Ham had dwelt there of old." (1 Chron. iv. 40.)

The name Horite is derived from cave, or hole, and means a cave-dweller. The Horites, as well as the Zuzims, may have been giants "great and tall, like the Anakims" (Deut. ii. 21). To them are attributed the excavation of the vast rock-dwellings which are still found in hundreds among the mountains of Edom and rocks of Petra. Now, this *third* land of Uz must have been that to which Jeremiah refers when he says, "Rejoice, O daughter of Edom, that dwellest in the land of Uz;" but for the first land of Uz we must seek, as we have said, north-

ward to Syria and Padan Aram in the days *before* Abraham.

We wish to give you the opportunity in reading the wonderful old Book of Job to compare for yourselves the reasons for believing Job to have lived *before* Abraham, *or just after* him; for the advocates of each opinion have much to say on either side; and in examining their various claims we shall be led into the heart and meaning of the book itself.

Let us take *first*, the reasons for believing that Job lived *before* Abraham, and in the time of the early Joktanites; his enemies were the Sabeans and the Chaldeans, those nations being first spoken of after the Flood. The Sabeans, named from Saba, in South Arabia, and the Chaldeans from the plain of Shinar; likewise a people with the habits of the Horites, whom Job says (chap. xxx.) he would have disdained to have set with the dogs of his flock.

"Who cut up mallows by the bushes, and juniper roots for their meat.

"They were driven forth from among men, (they cried after them as after a thief;)

"To dwell in the cliffs of the valleys, in caves of the earth, and in the rocks.

"Among the bushes they brayed; under the nettles they were gathered together.

"They were children of fools, yea, children of base men: they were viler than the earth."

But Job is also visited by his chosen friends, *wise* persons from Teman, from Shuah, from Naamah—all districts that border alike on Syria and Arabia.

Elihu is the son of a Buzite. There may have been a Buz as well as an Uz in near relation to Aram, Shem's grandson, before the Uz and Buz who were sons of Nahor, in the Arphaxad line.

Job mentions the gold of Ophir and the topaz of

Ethiopia, and he is thought to allude to the Pyramids of Egypt when he speaks of the "kings and counsellors of the earth, which built desolate places for themselves." (Chap. iii. 14.)

And now let us mark the events and peoples of which Job does *not* speak. There is no mention in this ancient book of God's dealings with Abraham or his children, neither of the patriarch's call, nor of the Exodus of Israel from Egypt, nor of any of the miracles that marked their going forth, which must have been heard of far and wide. Neither is there any allusion to the previous destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, which must have terrified all the dwellers east and west of the Jordan; although each history would so greatly have magnified the mighty power of God, and the converse of Job and his friends seems to be such a summing up of all that was known of Jehovah.

By the testimony of God Himself, there was not n all the earth such a perfect and upright man as Job; and very much more of his wisdom and knowledge is placed on record than of any other of the patriarchs. He seems to have been famous both in heaven and earth. We have in Genesis the narrative of noble facts and deeds, and short and vivid sketches of character; yet where shall we find such an introduction as in Job to the majestic current of thoughts and memories handed down through the families of Shem?

How these spiritual giants of earth's first 2,500 years towered above their fellows, when God kept them, by His grace, from worship of the heavenly bodies, forgetting the Creator in the works of His hands!

"If I beheld the sun when it shined (says Job), or the moon walking in brightness;

"And my heart hath been secretly enticed, or my mouth hath kissed my hand; I should have denied the God that is above." (Job. xxxi. 26—28.)

There is no other species of idolatry mentioned in the Book of Job than the first and most ancient, the worship of the sun and moon.

Job makes no reference to the fleshly mind of Egypt, which took the bull appointed for sacrifice, and lifted it into an idol, by the same species of delusion with which a modern school of error looks for salvation in the sacraments, and mistakes the sign for the thing signified. Neither does he refer to the first idolatries of Chaldea, to the symbol of the Presence and the Cherubic beasts. "The religious practices of Arabia," says Mr. Palgrave, "have always been remarkable for the absence of visible symbols and sculptured imagery; but their devotion was still misdirected; for the fourth king of Yemen was called Abd esh Shems, 'the servant of the sun,' and immemorial honours have been paid by the Arabs to Zahra, the morning star."

This writer also mentions that in Oman the people to this day still mutter their prayers with prostrations quite different to those of the Mahomedans, turning to the north star, which they worship by the same mysterious title, YAH, that is assumed by the Almighty to Himself in the Book of Exodus. He attributes their worship of this star to the idea of its always remaining fixed in the same place. This is a curious new light which the last five years of our century bring us in illustration of the Book of Job.

Job speaks of judgment as administered in the gate of cities; and that he was himself a patriarchal king, may be argued from his twenty-ninth chapter.

"When I went out to the gate through the city, when I prepared my seat in the street!

"The young men saw me, and hid themselves: and the aged arose and stood up.

"The princes refrained talking, and laid their hand on their mouth.

"The nobles held their peace."

He adds—

"I put on righteousness, and it clothed me: my judgment was as a robe and a diadem." (Job. xxix. 14.)

To the all-seeing eye it was known how true it was that he had been a man of peace, a judge, and father to the poor, eyes to the blind, and feet to the lame, bountiful and hospitable, "the greatest of all the men of the east." Before any part of our Bible was written, he had "esteemed the words of God more than his necessary food." He was diligent in all appointed sacrifices for sin; a man of prayer; a priest in his own household—which, it is said, marks his early era—and, in common with Enoch, he had enjoyed the patriarchal prevision of a Redeemer "to stand in the latter day upon the earth."

The manner in which his wealth is estimated, viz., by cattle, and the probable length of his life, is thought to prove the early age in which he lived; for as everything he had before is *doubled* when the Lord turned his captivity, it is supposed his *age* was *doubled also*, and that the years added being 140, those previous to his affliction had been 70, making his total age 210, whereas Abraham is said to have been an old man at 100.

Another great evidence of the remote antiquity of the book is that the friends, being Arabians of various districts, yet apparently continued to speak some common language, while there was evident need of an interpreter in Egypt at the time that Joseph's brethren came down there; but then Egypt was peopled from a *Hamite* stock, as were also early Chaldea and Canaan.

Having now placed before you the reasons for supposing that Job lived *before* Abraham, we must return to the subject of the peopling of Arabia; and having recognised the modern descendants of the Joktanites in the south, we must observe the rise of the race of ISHMAEL, whose history we have found interwoven in the twelve chapters that relate to his father Abraham.

You can follow out Ishmael's story in the 25th chapter of Genesis, after he had assisted Isaac to bury Abraham in the cave of Macphelah. In the 12th verse of that chapter begins the calendar of Ishmael's own sons, "twelve princes according to their nations." In the first generation after their father they are spoken of as possessing towns and castles; therefore they must have found their way to the green oases of the burning land. And, as it is recorded that Ishmael dwelt in the presence of all his brethren, so it is particularly mentioned that he died in their presence (Gen. xxv. 18) at the age of 137 years, half a century after his father.

The wilderness of Shur is in Stony Arabia, where the Israelites wandered; and Havilah is mentioned in connection with Eden. The Ishmaelites dwelt from Havilah to Shur. They settled all over the Peninsula, and chiefly in its central oases; where their race is still to be found distinct from the Joktanites. It was in the lower Nejd that Mr. Palgrave declares he saw the beginning of the mixture of the Ishmael and Kahtan races, which yet in general dwell apart, and are very different.

The Ishmaelites are otherwise named Hagarenes. Hagar, when cast forth by Abraham, dwelt with her son in the wilderness of Paran, north of Arabia. The promise of temporal prosperity to *his* seed (Gen. xvii. 20) was faithfully fulfilled. *His* fruit-

ful twelve tribes extended along the frontier of Arabia, from the northern extremity of the Red Sea towards the mouth of the Euphrates.

They had towers and towns, but many of them also followed a wandering life in moveable camps, as they do to this day; they also conveyed merchandize, and became wealthy and powerful. We hear of them in Joseph's time, about seventy years after their father's death, as on the way from Gilead to Egypt with camels, bearing spicery and balm, and myrrh (Gen. xxxvii. 25). They are also here called Midianites, and so associated with those who sprung from Abraham's son Midian, by his second wife Keturah.

You can look at Gilead and Midian on the map of Eastern Palestine (p. 44), and then turn to our picture of the castle of Salcah, or Salkadh, with its very old history, situate on the southern border of the land of Bashan.

Mr. Cyril Graham, a recent traveller, made various journeys from this castle occupying so commanding a position on the very edge of the desert, whence any foe could be seen almost a day's journey off. From its height he beheld the black towns and cities, the "giant cities of Bashan," all now unpeopled save by the birds of the air, the wolf, the hyæna, and the jackal. A stone door of one of these cities is found in the British Museum; but of this we shall have more to say when the children of Israel conquer the land after their wilderness journey.

We have brought you to Salcah to look forth on the wide plains of Ishmael's habitation beyond it. Moses says to Israel, when he is giving them the sum total of their conquests (Deut. iii. 8)—

"We took at that time from the kings of the Amorites the

land on this side Jordan from the river of Arnon unto Mount Hermon, and all Gilead, and all Bashan unto Salcah, and Edrei, cities of the kingdom of Og in Bashan;"

and we are again told in Joshua xii. 5, that

"Og reigned in Hermon and in Salcah, and in all Bashan."

From "Hermon to Salcah" is also as from Dan to Beersheba.

The fifth chapter of the 1st Book of Chronicles (9, 10 to 26) shows that Salcah must have stood on the eastern border of the children of Gad, whence Reuben was enabled to extend *his* border still eastward to "the entering in of the wilderness from the river Euphrates, because their cattle were multiplied in the land of Gilead. And in the days of Saul, they (the Reubenites) made war with the Hagarites, who fell by their hand; and they dwelt in their tents, upon all the face of the land east of Gilead."

The Hagarites were delivered into the hand of the Reubenites, and "there fell down many slain, because the war was of God;—and they took of their camels fifty thousand, and of sheep two hundred and fifty thousand, and of men an hundred thousand." And they dwelt in their steads until the captivity, *i.e.*, for 300 years, till "God stirred up the spirit of Pul, king of Assyria, to carry captive the Reubenites themselves into the land from which Abram came out.

Of the sons of Ishmael, Nebaioth, the first-born, was the father of the Nabatheans, who long afterwards governed northern Arabia. The second son, Kedar, was so famous among his Arab descendants that the name came to be applied to Bedouins in general. The Moabites and Ammonites who shared the land with the Ishmaelites, were, as we know, the children of Lot's daughters.

And now, to connect Esau's history with the rest of "the mingled people," we must, for the present, pass over that of Isaac and Jacob, and read only what relates to Rebekah's favourite and elder twin son in the 25th, 26th, 27th, and 28th chapters of Genesis, till we come to his marriage with Ishmael's daughter, Bashemath, the sister of Nebaioth (Gen. xxviii. 8, 9), and find him settled in the land of Seir, the country of Edom, south of the Dead Sea (Gen. xxxii. 3); to which he returns after his friendly meeting with his long-exiled brother, Jacob, with whom he afterwards unites, as Ishmael had done with Isaac, in burying their father.

"Isaac gave up the ghost, and died, and was gathered to his people, being old and full of days (an hundred and four-score years): and his sons Esau and Jacob buried him." (Gen. xxxv. 28, 29.)

And then chapter xxxvi. is given up wholly to the generations of Esau, "who is Edom," and his three wives—the Hittite, the Hivite, and the Ishmaelite; the last was his cousin Bashemath, and their son Reuel had again a son Zerah. Zerah is reckoned among the dukes of Edom, and kings succeeded dukes.

"And these are the kings that reigned in the land of Edom, before there reigned any king over the children of Israel.

"And Bela the son of Beor reigned in Edom; and the name of his city was Dinhabah.

"And Bela died, and Jobab the son of Zerah of Bozrah reigned in his stead.

"And Jobab died, and Husham of the land of Temani reigned in his stead."

Now those who do *not* believe that Job lived *before* Abram, consider that Moses *here* gives his ancestry, and declare that the Job of our Bible is most probably the great grandson of Esau, who stands sixth in descent from Abraham through

Ishmael, while Moses himself on his mother's side was also the sixth, though on his father's the seventh descendant, from the same great ancestor through Isaac.

"Oh, that Ishmael may live before Thee!" said his father Abraham; and in answer to this prayer the sons of Ishmael seem to have had their own possession and their own "blessing" in the land of the sons of Joktan. It is said of Ishmael himself, that he was "gathered to his people," whence some have hoped that he passed away in the patriarchal faith to the patriarchal blessing; but, at least, if the somewhat *later* view of Job's era be the true one, it appears that to a royal descendant of Ishmael and Esau, the blessing of the children of Shem was not denied. "Bless me, even me also, oh my father." "Hast thou not reserved a blessing for *me?* Hast thou but one blessing?" said poor Esau, in his bitterness. And did not the "reserved blessing" fall on Job? How far nobler are the annals of this second king of Edom (even with all his faults recorded), as regards the civilization they intimate, than any of the hard-won relics from Chaldea's clay inscriptions, or indeed from Egypt's idols of granite and marble.

Throughout the Septuagint version of the Scriptures, Job and his three friends are styled kings. This version makes the full age of Job 240 years, and if we accept its authority, we may take his biography as filling up the space between Joseph and Moses, during which era there is no personal narrative beside, of any of God's servants on the earth.

The civilization described in the Book of Job is very wonderful. A city and streets are alluded to in the land of Uz, as well as tents and tabernacles;

wines and dainty meats at feasts; the couch and looking-glasses of polished metal, tell of care for furniture; the harp, the organ, the tabret, and the timbrel accompanied the dance; gold ear-rings, the robe and diadem, precious stones and jewels, are all named; the mining and refining of metals was understood, and the use of money. There was writing, engraving, and weaving; fishing and riding, and shooting with steel bows; Job had 500 yoke of oxen, and the Chaldeans carry off his 3000 camels, a valuable booty, as these animals were always highly prized for the conveyance of commerce.

After all, this civilization in the land of Edom is only equal with that of ancient Egypt and of early Chaldea at the same era, and we must remember that these were the neighbouring countries. A king of Edom would not be unacquainted with the luxuries and possessions of surrounding nations. The grand references to the animal creation in the final address of Jehovah to his servant assure us that Job must have been familiar with the war-horses of the Assyrians, which, as we may now observe from their sculptures, were of noble blood (perhaps Arabian), and are drawn from the finest models.

> "From afar he snuffeth the battle,
> The thunder of the captains and the shouting."
> (Job xxxix. 25.)

We hope, dear friends, you may now take a fresh delight in the Book of Job, the true "Book of the Chronicles" of this early time, which gathers together all the knowledge of God inherited by the men of the Arabian desert. What light does that book throw on the records of Genesis?

There is such a wonderful dramatic character about it; it is so truly a "living oracle," that many of its students have been disposed to look upon it

in the light of a beautiful romance; but this is to ignore Divine witness to the fact of Job's individuality in the Book of the Prophet Ezekiel, and also apostolic reference:—

"Though these three men, Noah, Daniel, and Job, were in it [the land], they should deliver but their own souls by their righteousness, saith the Lord God." (Ezek. xiv. 14).

"Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord." (James v. 11).

To Moses is commonly accorded the renown of being either the writer or compiler of the thrilling history. It may have been a problem in his mind, worked out during his meditations in the desert, how to reconcile the apparently unmerited sufferings of his own people with the love and justice of Jehovah. The beginning of God's inspiration to his human soul may have been the lifting of the curtain from heaven's side of the history of Job. In all the Bible, till we come to the Book of Revelation, there is scarce such another window into the invisible world.

Down below all is darkness. Up above, Moses sees the Lord of love and pity only proving His child in the fire, delighting in his patience, and causing him to hold fast his integrity, and confuting by this means the Accuser of the brethren.

Down below lies poor Job, casting back in his memory for what shall have brought his woes upon him, driven by the harshness of those who came at first to comfort him, to show himself righteous in his own eyes. Up above is the Lord listening, remembering the submission of his dear child, when the first strokes of the rod fell upon him.

"The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." (Job i. 21).

The Refiner is watching the furnace, though He heats it seven-fold, and He is waiting for the tried

silver,—He is going to find the ransom (xxxiii. 24) and deliver from the pit. He has inspired the lips of Elihu, and to his mighty words Job finds no reply. The Lord confirms them with the whirlwind, and gives Job such a vision of Himself in light and power as vanquishes at once the least disposition to appeal against any of His ways; and the last finish of complete submission is now evident in His servant, for he says:—

"I have uttered that I understood not; things too wonderful for me, . . . but now mine eye seeth Thee."

"Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes." (Job xlii. 3, 6).

Then the Lord also accepted Job, and appointed him an intercessor for his friends.

About 2,520 years from the call of Abraham, and 600 years after Christ, there arose in this land of Arabia a false prophet, called Mohammed, who wrote a false book, named the Koran, which the Arabs consider inspired, and he caused it to be received at the point of the sword, alike by the sons of Ishmael from whom he was descended, and by the sons of Kahtan, or Joktan. Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, and CHRIST, are all held up therein as rising in authority and station—in their due gradation one above another—but "Mohammed is the last and most illustrious apostle of all, and with him the divine missions cease." The writer left out the heart and soul of all the Old Testament Scriptures—THE COMING SAVIOUR—and set up *himself* in its stead.

The Koran was Satan's finished lie for the Eastern world, his imitation of the Revelation of God; and, fabulous as much of it is, *it has sufficed to keep back Christ* from all the Arabic speaking nations for the latter half of the times of the Gentiles, even for 1,260 years.

"Ye are an intermediate nation, O Arabians," said their lawgiver to them; "witnesses against the rest of mankind! Wherever ye be turn your faces towards the holy temple of Mecca."

THE MOHAMMEDAN HOUR OF PRAYER.

Still, therefore, on the sands his followers spread their prayer-carpet—truly witnesses against any of the disciples of a better Master who neglect to commune with Him, the Ever Present.

The "mingled people" have since spread so widely over the earth that when Henry Martyn, the good missionary, spoke of undertaking a version of the New Testament in Arabic, he said, "We shall then begin to preach in Arabia, Syria, Persia, Tartary, part of India and China, half of Africa, and to all the sea coasts of the Mediterranean, and Turkey—and *one tongue shall suffice for them all.*"

Thus is fulfilled the prophecy about Ishmael:—"He shall be a great nation, and he shall dwell in the presence of all his brethren."

THE RUINS OF KARNAK.

A SPHINX.

THE TIMES BEFORE THE PENTATEUCH WAS WRITTEN.

ABRAHAM, JACOB, AND JOSEPH, IN EGYPT.

No. V.

BEFORE we can realise what was meant in Scripture by "going down into Egypt," we must try to picture that ancient country. We led you first to Chaldea and Assyria, because Nimrod's kingdom (the first kingdom of which we hear) begins there (Gen. x. 10). But Nimrod was only a grandson of Ham's through his elder son Cush. Ham's second son was Mizraim, who gives his name to the land of Egypt.

The ancient Egyptians called their country "CHAM," but the Hebrews called it Mizraim, which in the Hebrew of Genesis reads, "Metzrim:" "im" is the same as "yam," or "sea," and "tzr" means to enclose; Metzrim therefore signifies "encloser or embanker of the sea." We may conclude that Ham kept his second son in his own land, and gave him a portion in Lower Egypt, or the Delta, which seems to be the Metz-rim of Scripture. Herodotus, a Greek writer of the most ancient history, says that, in the reign of the first historic king of Egypt, whom he calls Menes, the whole of Egypt, except the province of Thebes, was an extended marsh. Another old writer says, "Egypt was not a country, but an universal sea." This arose from the unrestrained overflowing of the Nile; and before Egypt could have been habitable, and have become as it did the most fertile of all

lands, where the harvest scarcely ever failed, it *must* have had an embanker of the sea. At this day all Egypt is called Misr, which just means "the land of the embanker." The Pharaoh of Egypt afterwards declares: Ezek. xxix. 3.

"My river is my own, and I have made it for myself."

It is said of Menes, that having diverted the course of the river, he obliged it to run in the centre of the valley, between two parallel ridges of mountains, and that he built the city of Memphis in the bed of the ancient channel; he built a dyke above the site of the city, whose lofty mounds and strong embankments effectually confined the river Nile to its new bed. This dyke was kept always in repair by succeeding kings. We must remember this Menes or Metz-rim, Noah's grandson, "the embanker of the sea."

Much time has been lost by the learned in fancying Egypt to have an older history than our Hebrew Time-table of the Bible allows; but they have been obliged to come back to the fact that nothing *undoubted* on the monuments left to us either of Egypt, Babylon, or China, is now found after all to contradict the Bible chronology.

The Egyptians were a people very fond of writing and sculpture. They wrote on paper made from rushes, and these documents are called papyri; and they painted upon tablets the figures of their ancestors in long gigantic rows, whom the latest Pharaoh is represented as adoring. They called their kings Pharaoh from "Phra," the sun, and worshipped them when dead.

Two such tablets have been discovered at Abydos, in Upper Egypt—the last in the year 1864; and on this we have 76 Pharaohs, beginning with Menes, and coming down to the father of Rameses. The space

allowed in the Bible for their dominion is about 857 years, and two of them may have been reigning at the same time.

There were

603 years from the Flood to the birth of Joseph.
110 „ to the death of Joseph.
144 „ to the Exodus of Israel in 1451, B.C.

857

During which period the Hebrews had been multiplying for 400 years, and had been afflicted and oppressed by surrounding tribes and powers, first as a family in Canaan, and then as a mighty people in Egypt; even as God had declared to Abram.

"Thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years."

Therefore, as it is written in Psalm ciii. 23, 24—

"Israel also came into Egypt; and Jacob sojourned in the land of Ham. And he increased his people greatly, and made them stronger than their enemies."

"And the children of Israel were fruitful, and increased abundantly, and multiplied, and waxed exceeding mighty; and the land was filled with them." (Exodus i. 7.)

Then began the time of the bondage and of the

"Taskmasters set over them to afflict them with burdens. And they built for Pharaoh treasure cities, Pithom and Raamses. But the more they afflicted them the more they grew."

The "hard and bitter bondage," when they were made "to serve with rigour," was under a king who knew not Joseph, and may not have lasted more than a hundred years.

The Egyptian nation must have had an older rise than the Hebrews by between three and four hundred years. In the Old Testament Egypt

holds a place only second in importance to that of Palestine; and it is there first introduced to us as a country into which God guided the ancestors of His people, for the training of the nation's childhood, and out of which He led them by miraculous signs and wonders.

Egypt is that north-eastern valley and plain of AFRICA, watered by the river NILE. The Nile is the longest river in the world, and its source has been only traced within the last 10 years to the Lakes of Nyanza, which are fed by heavy tropical rains. The Nile is seldom more than half a mile broad, and it is confined for nine months of the year within its steep mud banks; but for the other three it pours over the burning land in an irresistible overflow—more like a sea than a river, leaving its fertilising mud behind; and when it retires the vegetation that springs forth is like that of a new-born world. The inundation begins towards the close of August. If the Nile fail to rise there is famine even in Egypt, as in the days of Joseph.

The Nile is often named in Scripture as "the river of Egypt," "the river 'Sihor,'" or the black. (Jer. ii. 18.)

But Egypt does not consist wholly of valley and river—it has adjoining table lands of *desert*, strewn with sand. These rise above the river in shelving cliffs, which range from 300 to 6000 feet; they have no vegetation, and their dazzling light yellow colour forms a striking contrast to the bright green valley, and the dark blue river that flows between its mountain ranges.

In their sides there are many grotto-graves and mummy-pits, and erected tombs. In fact, Egypt is one great cemetery; which caused the Israelites to say to Moses, "Because there were no graves in

Egypt hast thou taken us away to die in the wilderness?" (Exodus xiv. 11.)

As Egypt is called the land of Ham, we are sure that Ham *did* depart to it from the face of his father Noah, doubtless, with all the memories of the mighty works of the giants in the earth in former days; and the ideas of building in Egypt were so vast, that at this day we should say the records of their structures were fables, did not the immense remains exist to witness to the truth of history.

Who has not heard of the Egyptian Pyramids, those monstrous milestones on the highway of old time? They too were tombs—the tombs of Pharaohs, and are scattered, more than twenty in number, around the ruins of Memphis on the left bank of the Nile. The great Pyramid of Ghizeh, and its almost equally enormous neighbours, were built by Memphian kings.

"Memphis shall bury them,"

says Hosea (x. 4). This city is called Noph in Scripture. Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel, all speak of it in long after years, and their prophecies of its destruction by Nebuchadnezzar were fully accomplished.

The size of the larger pyramid is overwhelming. It is said once to have covered 12 acres of land. Its height was then 450 feet, and it contained eighty-five millions of cubic feet of stone. It stands eleven miles west of the Nile, and is in fact a mountain built of hewn stones, some of them thirty feet long. A French engineer has reckoned that the Great Pyramid would suffice to build a wall all round France, measuring 1,800 miles—a wall one foot thick and ten feet high.

The kings of the first period of Egypt's history are called Pyramid-kings; but their actual sepulchre

within the heart of the enormous mass consisted but of a few small chambers, and the royal body, if ever deposited, has since been removed in search for treasure. The name of the builder of the great pyramid of Ghizeh is inscribed upon it—*Shufu;* he is also called Cheops. The builder of the second is called Chephren; and in the third pyramid of Ghizeh hsa been found the stone coffin of the king for whom it was built, the coffin of King Mykerinus. On the floor of its sepulchral chamber was discovered a mummy-case, or rather its broken lid (for the pyramid had been rifled hundreds of years before by the Saracens), which proved to be, from the picture-writing upon it, the mummy-case and coffin of the builder.

That ancient lid, perhaps 4,000 years old, is now in the British Museum; you can go and see it there; and the far-off time to which it belongs, and the certainty of the occupant, throw an awful interest round this relic of the first Pharaohs.

These ancient and extraordinary Egyptians, whose thoughts seem always to have been occupied with their temples and their tombs, believed that the spirit, when it left the body, wandered on, never resting, giving life to some beast of the field, some fowl of the air, some fish of the sea,—waiting for the redemption of the original body; therefore they took great pains to preserve their bodies after death, in time-proof mansions. They had no Mosaic revelation to which to refer, to set them right when they were wrong; and after the death of the patriarchs, they derived their knowledge from tradition, or that which one told another.

Some recent discoveries in the Great Pyramid prove also, it is said, "that its first designer intended to make it, as well as a royal tomb, a stan-

dard of weights and measures to all mankind. Its inch, its pound, and its acre, come exceedingly close to the standard we still use. In its measures of *time*, special respect is paid to the week of seven days; and throughout the building there is such a constant protest against idolatry, that it appears to be not so much an Egyptian as a Hebrew devised structure of the inspired period, and of the age of the earliest patriarchs."

The gateway inserted below of the Egyptian temple of Dendera, is of a far later age than the pyramids, and has inscribed upon it the names of ROMAN emperors, but it is given chiefly to point

PORTICO OF THE TEMPLE OF DENDERA.

attention to the *orb and wings*, which are so well known on Egyptian sculptures of every age, and which are the symbol of the early worship of the sun, a similitude of the first brushes of dawning light in the eastern heavens.

There came from Shinar to Egypt, as well as to Assyria, the memory of the Eden cherubim. The accompanying forms may be found in the British

WINGED FIGURES RESEMBLING CHERUBIM IN EGYPT.

Museum, on the side of a sarcophagus, or vast stone coffin.

Very early, as we learn from the picture-writing, or hieroglyphics on the walls of ancient temples, true and noble notions of God, and of the past, and of the future, were mixed up with base idolatries, not only of sun, moon, stars, and men, but of brutes, reptiles, plants, and even insects. They bowed down to bulls, crocodiles, lily-flowers, onions, and beetles. Long galleries have lately been discovered hewn in the rocks near Memphis, opening every fifty yards into high arched vaults, under each of which reposes the most magnificent black marble sarcophagus, a chamber rather than a coffin, grander than those of the Theban kings; each the last resting-place of the successive corpses of the bull Apis; for the children of Ham, who once "knew God," had changed His "incorruptible glory into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and four-footed beasts, and creeping things." Here they are! the Pharaohs, the Ibises, the Bulls, and the Beetles,

left to illustrate the first chapter of the Epistle of St. Paul to the Romans; and for the sins to which God gave them up, who served the creature rather than the Creator, they have yet to enter into judgment.

The idea of worshipping the *bull* doubtless came from the memory of the cherubim; as Assyria had taken the *lion* and the *eagle*, the kings of the animal and bird creation, whether desert or domestic. The mystic beetle was the symbol of light and life to the Egyptians, and is generally found on the breast of all their priestly mummies. This they probably thought another rendering of the orb and wings, or another sun in miniature.

In Egypt the royal majesty is always represented by making the king, not like Saul, "from the head and shoulders," but from the foot and ankle upwards, higher than the rest of the people.

Avenues of giant kings towered high above the streets and temples of Thebes; and three of gigantic size still remain. Such a statue of Rameses sat on the right side of the entrance to his palace. Far and wide must have been seen his enormous head, and his vast hands resting on his elephantine knees. The statues which support the portico of the temple seem pigmies before him. "Son of man, speak unto Pharaoh king of Egypt," says the Lord by Ezekiel (xxxi. 2), "Whom art thou like in thy greatness?" Upon these words the vast statues are a wonderful comment.

Two such statues abide on the plain of Thebes to this day—the only two out of an avenue of eighteen like them whose remains strew the ground. Thebes is nineteen days' journey up the Nile, and was Egypt's second metropolis long before Israel was settled in the land of Goshen. The statues

and their thrones (not the pedestals) are cut out of one stone; they sit where they were first erected, and the Nile waters have washed their feet for three and thirty centuries with every year's inundation. At other seasons they rise from the green

STATUES OF AMENOPHIS III.

plain, and the African sky glows red behind them. They are sixty feet high; their faces are fearfully mutilated. They are the STONES OF EGYPT—symbols of her desolation.

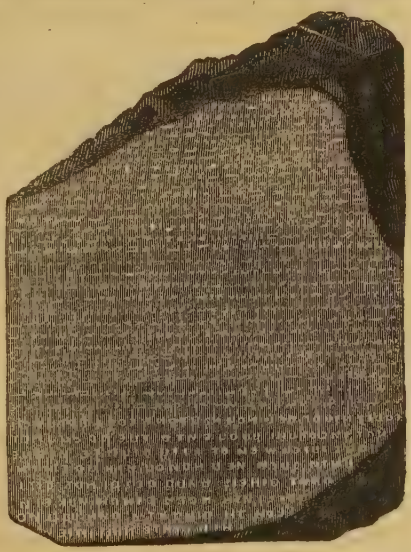
Thebes, or Theba, means *the ark*, and the chief temple there seems to have been built in commemoration of the Deluge;—a boat-like shrine was the most sacred object in the ancient Egyptian temples.

Thebes is a city that was thought worthy of mention in Scripture: it is there called "No-Ammon," "populous No," perhaps from No-ah.

It stood upon a vast plain describing a circuit of thirty miles, and was called "the City of the Hundred Gates," and the whole extent is *still* strewed with broken columns, avenues of sphinxes,

colossal figures, obelisks, porticoes, blocks of polished granite; and above these, in all the nakedness of desolation, tower the amazing pillars of the ancient temples. The largest and the oldest among these ruins is called "the Temple of Karnak;" and 134 of its pillars are still standing in rows, nine deep. There is no other such assembly of pillars in the world: they are covered with paintings of gods, kings, priests, and warriors: the walls and roof are still glowing with the richest colours. Many parts of this temple are older than the days of Moses—1,600 years before the birth of Christ. We have given you a hint of its glory in the frontispiece.

If we cannot go to Egypt to see these wonders of the early world, the stones of Egypt are brought to us. It is very impressive to the reader of the Bible to walk down the Gallery of Egyptian Antiquities in the British Museum, to mark the Rosetta Stone, whose inscription, in three languages, is said to give a wondrous key to the dark sayings on the monuments — and there also to find the scattered members of the colossal granite forms of Rameses or Thothmes—both the Pharaohs of Scripture—the enormous *foot*, the gigantic *fist*, the haughty and helmeted *head*. Here are the stones



THE ROSETTA STONE.

which Israel may have seen in Egypt ere they were cast down—but now, behold the "high arm of the wicked!" "it is broken," as Job said (xxxviii. 15). The giant arm and hand in red granite is a mute comment on the following words:—

"The word of the Lord came unto me saying—....I have broken the arm of Pharaoh, king of Egypt, and lo, it shall not be bound up to be healed.....And I will scatter the Egyptians among the nations, and disperse them through the countries,.....and they shall know that I am the Lord." (Ezek. xxx. 21, 23, 26.)

As Abraham went into Egypt about 430 years after the Flood, or more than 1900 B.C. (see Gen. xii. 10), he must have seen the *earliest* of its pyramids at Memphis. Despotic Pharaohs were then in existence, for he feared they would seize upon his fair Sarah, "kill him," and "save her alive;" but his fears were ungrounded; he was entreated well for her sake, and received addition to his shepherd wealth, and even Sarah was undeservedly restored unharmed through the interference of his Almighty Friend.

Meantime the Egyptian empire grows for another 400 years. The Temple of Karnak arises in Thebes —the "City of the Hundred Gates." ISAAC never goes down into Egypt; and we must return to his history in Palestine, and then see how Jacob's story blended with his son Joseph's in the land of Ham. Joseph's age was 39 when his father came down to him, and he was 56 at the death of Jacob. Of his 110 years, 88 were spent in Egypt.

JACOB AND JOSEPH IN EGYPT.

THE history of Isaac, the promised seed, begins in chapter xxi. of Genesis, as intertwined with that of his father, Abraham, and continues to the 10th verse of chapter xxviii., when it merges into

that of his son JACOB, who was born to him with Esau when he had reached the age of sixty, and while he dwelt by the well Lahai-roi, "The well of Him that liveth and seeth," where the angel first met Hagar.

Jacob's history may be found from Genesis xxvii. to xxxvii.; and is continued in connection with JOSEPH'S, from chapter xlii. to the close of the first book of the Pentateuch. Joseph's history begins in chapter xxxvii.

Esau had married Judith, a daughter of the children of Heth, when he was forty, and his father Isaac a hundred years old; and although Isaac had unwittingly transferred to Jacob the patriarchal blessing of the eldest son, he must have perceived that this transfer was by the will of God, for he confirms it to Jacob, ere he sends him away to the *Syrian* kindred of his mother Rebekah, to seek a wife of the chosen race of Shem, at Haran, near Damascus.

Jacob departs from "Beersheba, or the well of the oath," to which the family must have previously removed. It is said that Isaac reopened the wells which his father Abraham had dug, and which the Philistines had filled up again with earth. The existence of a city at Beersheba is mentioned in Gen. xxvi. 33. And many years afterwards Jacob revisited the spot for solemn worship, before starting for Egypt with his family. (Gen. xlvi. 1—5.)

Those very wells of Beersheba are still visited by travellers of our own age; they are lined with masonry, and the deep grooves cut in the curb-stones by the friction of ropes, make their edges appear to be frilled or fluted.* All around lie the

* The Arabs always bring their own ropes to these wilderness wells, which explains the saying of the woman of Samaria: "Sir, thou hast nothing to draw with, and the well is deep."

stone camel-troughs of ancient days. Seven wells have been described by different travellers, which is worthy of notice, because "Sheba" in Hebrew signifies *seven*, as well as an oath.

Two of these wells are five feet across, but a third is much wider, twelve feet and-a-half across, which is probably the well whereof the Lord spoke unto Moses in Numbers xxi. 16. "Gather the people together, and I will give them water. Then Israel sang this song,

> Spring up, O well; sing ye unto it:
> The princes digged the well, the nobles of the people digged it,
> By direction of the lawgiver, with their staves."

Hagar saw the first well of Beersheba (Gen. xxi. 19), which revived the fainting Ishmael.

By the wells they dug Abraham and Isaac have sat with Abimelech, made sacred oaths of peace, and planted groves. The wandering Arab strikes his tent, and leaves but the ashes of his extinguished fires. The patriarchs left wells and groves.

From Beersheba Abraham journeyed with Isaac to offer him in sacrifice; and, restored to his father by the word of the Lord, here Isaac himself dwelt long and peacefully.

From this spot Jacob fled, having filched birthright and blessing from his brother Esau; *here* the Israelites entered the land they were to possess, even unto Dan. Here Samuel made his sons judges, and hence Elijah wandered out into the southern desert from the wrath of Jezebel, when God was about to feed him with that meat in whose strength he went forty days to Horeb, the Mount of God.

It was in Gerar, west of Beer-Sheba, among the Philistines, that Isaac dwelt, when the Lord said unto him, "Go not down into Egypt; sojourn in this land," and here he received *his* first

blessing (xxvi. 3), for himself and his seed, and all nations. In Gerar Isaac sowed, and received in the same year an hundredfold. Abram had been called by the children of Heth "a mighty prince," and Isaac "went forward," and was "very great" in possession of flocks, herds, and servants. The Philistines envied him, and even the friendly Abimelech said to him, as the Egyptians afterwards said to the people of Israel, "Go from us; for thou art much mightier than we." He dug more wells in Gerar, but he was obliged to name them Esek, "*contention*," and Sibnah, "*hatred*," before he obtained the blessing of Rehoboth, "*room*."

It was specially at Beersheba that the *second* blessing reached Isaac (xxvi. 24), and it is given for "Abraham's sake." Jacob, it is evident, did not go up to Padan-aram till he was seventy-seven years old, when Isaac must have been 137. Before this Isaac is spoken of as old and dim-sighted, and expecting the day of his death, which appears, however, not to have occurred for forty-three years, when Jacob and Esau bury him at the age of a hundred and fourscore in the cave of Machpelah. Jacob is away from him for twenty years with Laban, during which the much coveted blessing is confirmed to this favoured son, a *third*, *fourth*, and *fifth* time, by God Himself, at Bethel, at Peniel, and at Bethel yet again (see Gen. xxviii. 19; xxxii. 30; xxxv. 11, 15); his father Isaac had blessed him *twice*, so that there are *seven* prophetic blessings upon *Isaac and Jacob*, confirming the *seven* bestowed upon Abraham.

FOURTEEN *are the precious* TITLE DEEDS received from their fathers by the nation chosen by God as witnesses for Himself in a fallen world. No *faultless* witnesses however, for in Jacob's last words

to his twelve sons, those addressed to Reuben, to Simeon, and to Levi, almost disguise the father's blessing under his emphatic blame. The Bible is so really fitted to be the guide of our daily life, because it is so truthful and impartial in its narratives. Zebulun, Issachar, Dan, Gad, Asher, Naphtali, and even Benjamin, the prophetic spirit does not so much *bless* as it tells them "that which shall befal them in the last days;" but for Judah and to Joseph (or Ephraim), the blessing brims over. They are the two *heads* of the tribes.

"The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be.

"Binding his foal unto the vine, and his ass's colt unto the choice vine; he washed his garments in wine, and his clothes in the blood of grapes.

"His eyes shall be red with wine, and his teeth white with milk."

And Joseph,

"Is a fruitful bough, even a fruitful bough by a well; whose branches run over the wall:

"The archers have sorely grieved him and shot at him, and hated him;

"But his bow abode in strength, and the arms of his hands were made strong by the hands of the mighty God of Jacob; (from thence is the shepherd, the stone of Israel)."

Every blessing of the heaven above and of the deep that lieth under—all are his, to the utmost bound of the everlasting hills.

It is very interesting to turn from the 49th of Genesis to the 33rd of Deuteronomy, and compare the blessing of Moses to the tribes of Israel, 238 years afterwards, when the seventy souls had been multiplied into a great nation, the children and successors of the 600,000 fighting men who had fallen in the wilderness in the last forty years of that interval (Num. i. 46). In the list of Moses

every tribe has its share of blessing; but the pre-eminence of JUDAH is for the time surpassed by that of LEVI, the priestly tribe.

"They shall teach Jacob thy judgments, and Israel thy law. .....Smite through the loins of them that rise against him, and of them that hate him, that they rise not again."

Reuben "shall live," and not die; Benjamin "is the beloved of the Lord;" Zebulon may "rejoice in going out," and Issachar "in his tents;" Gad "is blessed and enlarged;" Dan shall "leap from Bashan;" Naphtali is "satisfied with favour;" Asher "dips his foot in oil" at the end of the wilderness journey; but on Joseph and his sons, Ephraim and Manasseh, there is not only *repeated all the wealth of Jacob's former blessing*, but there is added the "goodwill of Him that dwelt in the bush;" and the sign of the unicorn is given him, for "with his horns (of power) he shall push the people together to the ends of the earth." *He* therefore is not restricted to the land of promise, but at some time of his children's history has much to do with the blessing *on all nations*. Have you ever noticed that the arms of Great Britain are the lion and the unicorn? It has not been observed that the unicorn is used in the arms of any *other* nation.

The blessing of Joseph begins to be fulfilled even in Egypt. His own prophetic dream of his father and his brethren bowing down to him, for which Jacob rebuked him, here comes to pass. The beautiful conduct of Joseph throughout his exaltation is an exquisite story for all times and ages, that touches every heart.

We do not profess to tell it; these chapters of the Story of the Book are only intended to be laid beside an open Bible, and to point to the pictures drawn by the finger of God, bringing together a few

general things about them which ought to be known by those who have few books and little time to search for themselves.

With regard to Israel as a family of shepherds, the sheep-walks of Goshen were ceded to them where they might dwell apart, because, as Joseph informed them, every shepherd was an abomination to the Egyptians (Gen. xlii. i.) We find figures of shepherds on the soles of Egyptian sandals to indicate that they wished to tread them under their feet. It is remarkable that Pharaoh bids Jacob's sons dwell in the land of Goshen, "because it is the best of the land"; and it is for other reasons concluded that he was himself one of the shepherd kings who had conquered Egypt, and who was again expelled by Amosis the Liberator—the king who "knew not Joseph." In the Book of Exodus xii. 40, it is said that "the sojourning of the children of Israel who dwelt in Egypt was 430 years." That this 430 years comprises the whole period from the call of Abraham to the Exodus, we learn from St. Paul's comment, in his Epistle to the Galatians (iii. 16, 17), who shows that this date extends from the covenant of promise to the giving of the Law.

It is natural to ask if there is any satisfactory evidence *from the monuments of Egypt* of the existence of the Israelites at the period when Scripture chronology suppose them to have been there, between B.C. 1706 and B.C. 1491.

We need not expect to find the word ISRAEL in the Egyptian papyri—that would probably be a name used by the people in speaking of themselves, as GOD'S name for them; but they were long known to foreigners only as THE HEBREWS. Joseph is spoken of as a Hebrew (Gen. xxxix.); the nation as Hebrews, in Pharaoh's order (Exod. i.) They were

not known as Jehudim (Jews) until after the separation of the ten tribes under Jeroboam.

Two documents exist in the Museum of Leyden which speak of a *stranger* race in Egypt occupied in building works, and these records date from the reign of Rameses II. This hieroglyph reads, APERI-U, or HEBER-IM, the Hebrews. Egyptian pictures for words are called hieroglyphs.

APERI-U.

A Prussian consul has lately deciphered papyri which have reference to the building of Pithom and Raamses, by the Apuras, Hebrews; and there is a rock inscription in the Valley of Ham Surat which mentions the labours of 800 Hebrews in the stone quarries. The figures accompanying the inscription are of Jewish type, and distinguished by a long beard from their Egyptian overseer. The bondage of the children of Israel is represented also on the tomb of Rekshare, the chief architect of the temples at Thebes. The faces of the Jews it is impossible to mistake; their bodies are covered with splashes of clay; the Egyptian taskmaster is seated with his heavy baton, whose blows would certainly visit some weary slave, resting a moment from his toilsome task of making bricks. Some of these very bricks, *mixed with straw*, are seen in the British Museum.

The inscription at the top of the picture to the right reads, "Captives brought by his majesty to build the temples of the Great God."

Rameses was a family name, like Pharaoh, borne by many kings, and it is not easy to fix their several dates. While these are, as it were, "blotted out,"—the names of *two women are recorded* for ever in the Bible, SHIPHRAH and PUAH, who feared God, and risked their own safety in the days of persecu-

tion, saving alive the infants of the Hebrews whom they were called to destroy. The last king of the nineteenth dynasty, Si Ptah Menephtha, "the light of the sun," was not buried in his own tomb, and *he* may have been the Pharaoh who perished in the Red Sea.

The prophet Isaiah, writing 800 years after the Exodus of Israel, puts this song into the mouth of Judah:—

"O Lord our God, lords beside Thee have had dominion over us [and this must have especially included Egypt].

"Dead they shall not live; deceased they shall not rise: therefore hast Thou visited and destroyed them, and made all their memory to perish." (Isa. xxvi. 13, 14.)

There are two or three closing particulars yet to notice concerning Egypt. Let us look at the 19th of Isaiah, written more than 900 years after the death of Joseph: it refers to the "princes of Zoan," and wise counsellors of Egypt; and the "perverse spirit that became mingled in the midst of them," so that the country was caused to err in all its works (ver. 11 to 14), and the counsel being destroyed the people were to seek to idols, and charmers, and wizards, and familiar spirits (ver. 3), and the *very name of Egypt* was to be held for a *symbol of idolatry and worldliness*, "a place where the Lord was crucified," set side by side with Sodom, in the Book of the Revelation xi. 8:

"The great city which *spiritually* is called Sodom and Egypt;"

and where there was *no* crucifying of the flesh with its affections and lusts.

Yet in Egypt, as in this present world, the Lord would train Israel and educate Moses. The Lord JesusHimself, as an infant, was carried there, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, "Out of Egypt have I called my son." (Hosea xi. 1.)

THE FIVE-PEAKED SERBAL.

THE TIMES WHEN THE PENTATEUCH BEGAN TO BE WRITTEN.

MOSES, "THE SERVANT OF GOD."

No. VI.

In the first five tracts of this series we have only led our readers to the study of the *first* book in the Bible, Genesis, or, "the book of the beginning." But it is a book comprising the story *of two thousand three hundred and sixty-nine years*, ending with the death of Joseph. In its fifty chapters is included the whole history of the world before the Flood ... ... 1656 years.

The space between the Flood and Abram	352	,,
And that between Abram's birth and Joseph's death	361	,,
	2369	

There is no other inspired book which represents such a space of time.

The book of Exodus, or the book of "the going out" from Egypt, comprises but 144 years—and 63 of these up to the birth of Moses are signalized by one event recorded in the first chapter; that vast multiplication of the people of Israel, which was so grievous to the new king of Egypt, who "knew not Joseph," and which led to his murderous edict to destroy all their new born sons.

Among these babes devoted to destruction, one, strange to say, is saved by Pharaoh's own daughter.

There is an obelisk at Thebes, which is still standing, while the colossus of Rameses lies low. On this obelisk are inscribed such titles as "Lady of both Countries;" "Great Royal Sister;" "PHARAOH'S DAUGHTER!" There is but one queen regent in the royal lists, and this is therefore doubtless the "Pharaoh's daughter" of Exodus, the princess Termuthis, who had power to influence a jealous priesthood to initiate Moses, her supposed heir, in all the wisdom of Egypt. From her Moses receives his Egyptian name, which signifies, "drawn out of the water."

He was a "goodly child," "exceedingly fair," having a body and mind prepared of God for the especial inhabitation of His Divine Spirit (Isa. lxiii. 11), and perhaps his greatest qualification for this matchless privilege, also given him of God, is outlined by another hand in the transcription of his book of Numbers. In chapter xii., verse 3, it is remarked, within parentheses, as it could not have been by himself:—

"(Now the man Moses was very meek, above all the men who were upon the face of the earth.)"

The scribe who closes the book of Deuteronomy, declares,

"There arose not a prophet since in Israel like unto Moses, whom the Lord knew face to face."

The author of all evil had said to the first pair when tempting them to eat of the forbidden fruit, "Ye shall be as gods," but he had no power to keep such delusive promise to his victims.

What does the Lord say to Moses?

"Thou shalt be to thy brother Aaron instead of God." (Ex. iv. 16.)

"And see, I have made thee as a God to Pharaoh" (Ex. vii. 1); and behold it was so. Moses was made the first

worker of miracles in the world's history. The Lord had chosen "a people," and He had now prepared them a leader, for whom He ordained during the first forty years of his life the education of a court, and a training in whatever wisdom was left in idolatrous Egypt; an advantage which was likely to have been counterbalanced by the "pleasures of sin," had not Jehovah given him a heart to renounce them, and possibly to forego the heirship of the Egyptian crown.

"By faith.....choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God.....and esteeming the reproach of CHRIST greater riches than the treasures of Egypt.....by faith too forsaking Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king." (Heb. xi. 25—27.)

The day of Christ which Abraham saw, in vision of the future, must also therefore have been revealed to Moses.

From the tuition of the palace, however, Moses was withdrawn by the hand of his Mightiest Teacher, when forty years of age, and sent, as we learn from Acts vii. 30, for just as long a space of time, to be a stranger in the wilderness of Arabia —in the simplicity of desert and shepherd life, to forget much probably, and learn more; here his mind was enriched by meditation, and his soul fed in obscurity and solitude. It may have been here that the Spirit of the living God instructed and prepared him to write the Book of Genesis, from whose first page a child may learn more in an hour than all Egypt's wise men knew without it by the study of their lives. Perhaps Moses possessed earlier documents, handed down through his grandfather Levi; but whether he did or not, the "Lord was with him" in his task, and has preserved the fruit of his inspired labour to this day. He wrote the only ancient history we can trust, the one by which all others must stand or fall.

In that long calm oasis of his shepherd life, how the pictures of Egypt must have passed before his memory! The land of Midian lay around the eastern gulf of the Red Sea, and was supposed to have been settled by the posterity of Midian, fourth son of Abraham and Keturah. You will find it marked in two places in the maps of Arabia and Eastern Palestine, pp. 14 and 44. The Midianites were a wandering race, like the Ishmaelites, and were scattered along the district north of Arabia, and east of the Jordan. They had a patriarchal priest or prince named Jethro, his seven daughters watered their flock by a well, like Rachel of old; and when Moses, like Jacob, assisted them in their task, they supposed him an Egyptian.

One of those seven daughters, Zipporah, became his wife, and the name of the firstborn son proclaimed the father's feeling, Gershom, "a stranger here," for as he kept the flock of his father-in-law, his heart must often have ached at the stray tidings of the oppression of Israel. His people were in a "furnace of iron" (Deut. iv. 20), and their "sigh" and "cry," came up into the ear of God, while he, their brother, was breathing the free air of the wilderness, till the second course of his education among those sands and mountains had tamed down the fire of his early indignation, and till he became the meekest man upon earth. Surely *then* and *there* he must have studied the patience and impatience of Job; and what human history could better have prepared him for the mission of his forty years to come.

He would also, it is probable, in the desert have been refreshed by the patriarchal piety of Jethro, his father-in-law, for we are much disposed to believe with Dr. Bonar, that Jethro was one of those

patriarchal priests in Arabia, who, like Melchisedek in Canaan, and Job in the land of Uz, preserved in different lands the knowledge of the true God before there was any written Revelation, at least any that has come down to us.

We cannot but remark the reverence which Moses afterwards paid to his father-in-law, who is called by various names in Scripture—Jether, or the excellent; while Hobab (Judges iv. 11) may mean "beloved"; in Exod. ii. 18 he is called Reuel; and, again, Raguel, or "friend of God," in Num. x. 29, where we are told that he had a son named Hobab.

Moses did obeisance to him (Exod. xviii. 7) as he restored his wife Zipporah and her sons, when the whole body of the Israelites came and encamped at the Mount of God, in the old district so well known to Moses in his forty years of solitude; and then Jethro rejoiced with his son for all the goodness that the Lord had shown to Israel, and declares his patriarchal knowledge that the Lord is greater than all gods.

Jethro further takes a burnt-offering and sacrifices for God, provides a feast, and calls to it Aaron and the elders of Israel; and with his blessing to Moses we may connect St. Paul's comment, that "the less is blessed of the better." Jethro mingles his counsel with such words of paternal authority and wisdom as would imply a far greater age than Moses, who, it will be remembered, was then himself eighty years old. With much sagacity and experience, and with affectionate solicitude, he says, on observing the constant consultations of the people with their leader: "The thing that thou doest is not good; thou wilt surely wear away"; and suggests a mode of effectual help from others; and his ad-

vice was so admirable and well timed, that Moses hearkened to the voice of his father-in-law, and "did all that he said."

We introduce this after-passage in the life of Jethro because of his being an example of what was known and believed in PATRIARCHAL TIMES, which, we must remember, comprehended an immense period of the history of the world. They were AS LONG as the TIMES OF THE GENTILES, if we count our own period *back*—beyond the coming of the Lord—to about 660 B.C., when the chosen nation was pronounced rejected, because of the sin of Manasseh. And if we would study the Bible aright we must endeavour to realize this.

"I will cause them to be removed into all kingdoms of the earth, because of Manasseh the son of Hezekiah king of Judah, for that which he did in Jerusalem." (Jer. xv. 4.)

But it was from communion far higher than with Jethro or Job that Moses came forth from the desert prepared to be a leader of his people. Man is never truly great but as brought into conjunction with God Himself. And let us now observe the place and time of the Divine revelation to this *representative* man—the mediator of the Old Mosaic Covenant, as we call it (Gal. iii. 19)—who foreshadowed the Lord Jesus, the Mediator of the New. A "people" were being nurtured in their hard nursery by the Nile, who were to be God's witnesses in the old world to the heathen around them, and whose pilgrimage and settlement would prefigure the experience of *all* God's spiritual sons and daughters to the end of time.

Some readers reject the idea of types, or *prophecy in action*, as altogether visionary and unprofitable; but even these ought to admit that we are always safe in learning from types *when Apostles teach us;*

and in the wonderful depths of God's ancient Word there are closed doors into which no hasty reader enters—into which none could have dared to enter unless the key of inspiration had unlocked their Divine mysteries.

Was not Paul surely taught of the Spirit concerning the history of His people when he went for three years into Arabia, as he tells the Galatians? (i. 17.) This wide word "Arabia" must have included the rocks of Edom and Petra, whence Arabians came to the festivals at Jerusalem (Acts ii. 11). Perhaps also his steps were turned to those mountain heights by the Red Sea, once familiar to the footsteps of Moses and Elijah, and hallowed by the presence of God. His allusions to Agar and Sinai are almost surely those of one who had looked upon its peaks.

Let us think of Moses and Paul, the *lawgiver* and the *expounder of the law*, meeting in spirit on the same mountain, and holding fellowship across a space of more than 1,500 years; the intermediate link being Elijah, the great *reviver* of the law in the prophetic period.

It is Paul who, living over again the wilderness pilgrimage of Israel, teaches us that all its incidents happened unto us for ensamples, and also that these typical histories "are written for our admonition, on whom the ends of the world are come" (1 Cor. x. 11). He points to the people as commencing their journey by a baptism unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea. He calls their manna "spiritual meat," their water from the rock "spiritual drink"; and he adds in plain exposition, "That rock was Christ."

But it is more especially the beloved John, who dilates on Jesus as the "Lamb of God (John i. 29),

slain on the altar of Abel, in the sacrifices of Noah and Abraham, and on the Passover night—all shadows of the sacrifice on Calvary, and marking the shed blood of a sinless victim, as the only porch of entrance to the privileges of the chosen people.

The Passover lamb, the heavenly manna, the "living water," the "spiritual rock," were all figures to convey Divine truth to the senses of a race who could only be taught by their senses, who were in their mental childhood: signs from which *they* were to look *forward*, as *we* may learn from them by looking *backward*. They were all introductory to a written law on TABLES OF STONE, which was visibly to form the character of God's child Israel in the desert, but which had been inferentially taught also to the patriarchal world, even through the antediluvian age.

Our Lord reproaches the Sadducees with not knowing those Scriptures which they had received, because they had not deduced the doctrine of a future life from the statement, "I *am* the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. God is not the God of the dead, but of the living." The doctrine of the Resurrection was *there* if they had sought it out.

Let us realize the ground on which Moses and Paul thus meet in spirit. Moses led his flock from the north-eastern gulf of the Red Sea "to the back side" (or the south) of the desert of El Tih, in stony Arabia, and came to the mountain of God, even to Horeb, or, literally, Horeb-ward (Exod. iii. 1). We are told that Horeb is the name for the *whole* region; and you perceive there is a "mount of God" mentioned before the giving of the law. And now THE ANGEL OF THE LORD, in a flame of fire, out of the midst of a bush, called unto

Moses, twice repeating his mortal name; and when Moses said, "Here am I," the Divine voice warned him,—

"Draw not nigh hither: put off thy shoes from off thy feet for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground.

"Moreover He said, I am the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. And Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look upon God."

The next utterance of the Divine voice was full of precious sympathy to the ear of Moses:—

"I have surely seen the affliction of my people; I have heard their cry by reason of their taskmasters; for I KNOW THEIR SORROWS; and I am come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians."

The burning bush has been identified with the wild acacia, the shaggy thorn-bush—the outgrowth of these wastes—now found only on Mount Serbal. Stewart says he saw not one in the valleys about Gebel Mousa, the monkish Sinai. Here it often tangles by its desert growth into a thicket, as it spreads out its grey foliage and yellow blossoms over the sands. A slightly different species of the tree is the "shittah," or shittim wood, of which the pillars of the tabernacle were made. This tree, though the chief growth of the desert, is very rare in Palestine. The gum which exudes from it is said to be the old Arabian frankincense.

Not in any colossal form, such as the priests of Egypt figured, did God reveal His PRESENCE to Moses; but in accordance with the scene around, from the thicket blazing with unearthly fire amid the rocky ledges of the hill-side. And of how much did the Divine voice speak to its one reverent hearer out of the bush in that single interview! He was told to what land his people should go—whom they should conquer—and how they

should be brought forth out of Egypt. Again a window is opened in heaven, as in Job i., and Moses is permitted to perceive the intentions of God, and utters the deep whisper of his humble self-distrust—the "*Who* am I?" following the former "*Here am I*," which marked the instrument "made meet for the Master's service."

Then followed a promise and a token:—

"And He said, Certainly I will be with thee; and this shall be a token unto thee: When thou hast brought forth the people out of Egypt, ye shall serve God UPON THIS MOUNTAIN."

The whole prophetic history of the Plagues of Egypt is compressed into the revelation from the burning bush. But those forty quiet years of God's teaching had so prepared the mind of Moses against elation at being singled out as a listener to this wondrous "talk from heaven," that his faith had not yet risen to the circumstances, and he still would shrink from the mighty call. But the "Who am I?" is not to hinder the "Here am I"; and at last he goes to tell Jethro, his father-in-law, that he must return into Egypt; and Jethro said to Moses, "Go in peace."

We must not leave in haste this wondrous bush, "burning with fire, yet not consumed," for in this symbol we have a complete picture of Israel's history, as it is told throughout the Word of God. Here was their first experience of affliction and succour from on high, the foreshadow of how many deliverances afterwards. Here, too, was the fulfilling of what God had said to their father Abram, in his vision, amid "an horror of great darkness," of the affliction that should befal his seed in a strange land. The cry of the commencement of the 80th Psalm, written by Ethan, the grandson of Judah, may have been that of Israel in Egypt:

"O Lord God of hosts, how long wilt thou be angry against the prayer of thy people?

"Thou feedest them with the bread of tears, and givest them tears to drink in great measure."

And of the going forth, it is said in the 81st Psalm,

"I removed his shoulder from the burden: his hands were delivered from the pots.

"Thou calledst in trouble, and I delivered thee; I answered thee in the secret place of thunder: I proved thee at the waters of Meribah. Selah."

Alas! it is written in the 11th verse,

"But my people would not hearken to my voice; and Israel would none of me.

"So I gave them up unto their own hearts' lust: and they walked in their own counsels.

"Oh that my people had hearkened unto me, and Israel had walked in my ways!"

Israel in Scripture is variously represented under the symbols of this bramble-bush, and of a vine, a fig-tree, and a cedar; shewing their rise from worldliness to a glory yet to come. Until the Lord took possession of the bramble-bush, how could it bring forth fruit? Jesus Himself makes this reference (Luke vi. 44):

"For of thorns men do not gather figs, nor of a bramble-bush gather they grapes."

During the interval God had often called Israel His "vine," and His "fig-tree," but when He came to dwell with them and die for them on earth, He found them as from the beginning, a "bramble-bush," which deserved to have been consumed, but yet was not, and was miraculously preserved by His presence in the midst of it, by the "goodwill of Him who dwelt in the bush" (Deut. xxxiii. 16). This "goodwill" was sung in the hallelujahs of the heavenly host to shepherds watching their flocks by night on the plains of Bethlehem. (Luke ii. 14.)

Directly He did take possession of the thorn-bush it was called a vine. See the 80th Psalm:

"Thou hast brought a vine out of Egypt: thou hast cast out the heathen, and planted it."

It was of His own pure "goodwill" that God elected the nation of the Hebrews to be His "first-born" among the nations—that He took of the thorn-tree, the shittah, or "shittim wood," to make the framework of the tabernacle; and now He would remember His covenant with the fathers, Abram and Isaac, and Jacob, by keeping His promise "to the selfsame day," at the end of the 430 years—that day, and that night, says Moses, is "to be observed of all the children of Israel in their generations." (Ex. xii. 41—42.) They had been afflicted from the time that Laban oppressed Jacob, and served in a land that was not theirs, even before the bondage in Egypt, and now they were brought forth "with a high hand and a stretched out arm."

After the revelation of the burning bush, the first dealing of God was with Moses himself. He convinced him that He could be made at once a worker of miracles, and that he had nothing to do but to be taught and led like a little child in God's hand, with his brother Aaron. He was to become, though he knew it not, a mediator between God and this great and sinful people; he is so called in Scripture. He prayed for them before the Lord. Aaron, his brother, was often appointed to speak for him to the people, and even to work miracles; but Aaron, as it were, dies away with his age and people. Moses is remembered through all time. All great works of leadership must be chiefly accomplished by prayer; then God supplies the able hands to execute what is devised under His direction. Moses was also a prophet, a recorder, a scribe; his education in

Pharaoh's court may have given him this faculty. He had to narrate what God's Spirit taught him. And what mighty facts formed his material—how many divine words and acts!

He was now to go and say to Pharaoh, in God's name,

"Israel is my son, even my firstborn: and I say unto thee, Let my son go, that he may serve me: and if thou refuse to let him go, behold, I will slay thy son, even thy firstborn." (Ex. iv. 23.)

Immediately after this we read the startling announcement that at this time "the Lord met Moses in the inn and sought to kill him. His wife, Zipporah, it seems, knew why; and she had probably resisted the wish of Moses to circumcise his son Gershom. Now in haste and fear she does it herself, and is for a time exiled from her husband, that he may be left free to his solemn mission.

The Lord cannot claim of the people an observance of which their leader does not set the example. It is now set and followed, for it is observed, Josh. v. 5,

"Now all the people that came out (of Egypt) were circumcised."

Without which the passover could not have been eaten.

"For no uncircumcised person shall eat thereof." (Ex. xii. 48.)

The companion provided of God for Moses, now appears in the story.

"And the Lord said to Aaron, Go into the wilderness to meet Moses. And he went, and met him in the mount of God, and kissed him." (Ex. iv. 27.)

During the journey of the brothers into Egypt, the Revelation of the bush was repeated by Moses to Aaron, who thus received the Divine commission; and then began the splendid series of miracles

which announced to the great idolatrous nation that the era of the servitude of the Lord's people was over, and that Pharaoh must "let Israel go."

These miracles appear to have been not more necessary to overawe the tyrant than to instruct and impress the bondmen themselves, amongst whom the knowledge and worship of Jehovah seems to have been gradually decreasing. They were in "anguish of spirit and cruel bondage."

Think what miracles they were! it was no common river that was turned into blood, but their sacred, their fertilizing Nile! Think of their thirst when they loathed the water, in all their ponds and pools and cisterns, besides the Nile, for seven days. Think of the "vermin multiplying out of the dust of the desert sands, or the frogs putrefying in heaps by every house, and in every field, to the utter disgust of the cleanliest of ancient nations, clothed in white linen."

And then their gods were smitten—their bull Apis died, their calves, their sacred goats, their crocodiles. The garden of the East, as they thought their verdant strip of country, threading the desert with its meadows and palm-groves,—it was all laid waste, and yet Pharaoh would not let the people go.

But it came at last, that night of the Lord, remembered now so clearly, though it is 3,358 years ago, when one loud frantic funeral wail broke forth, from that of Pharaoh on his throne to that of the captive in the dungeon, for "there was not a house in which there was not one dead"; and at last, seeing, as had been foretold, the firstborn of every family cut down by the God of the Hebrews, Pharaoh hastily gave the midnight word that the Israelites should depart; "Yea, with a strong hand did he drive them out of the land;" for the stretched-out arm of Jehovah

had "smitten Egypt with all His wonders," and "THE PEOPLE" forsook "the house of bondage," in number 600,000 fighting men, besides children and a mixed multitude, who followed in their train.

The firstborn of Israel had been passed over, when the firstborn of every house in Egypt was smitten, "the chief of their strength in the tabernacles of Ham" (Ps. lxxviii. 51); and the "Lamb of God," for whose sake they had been spared, was to be slain and fed upon by every household of

Jacob for itself; *when this had been done, they could no longer remain in Egypt.* Each was to take of the blood of the lamb, and strike it on the two side-posts* and on the upper door-post of the houses wherein they should eat it, and so escape "the destroyer's" finger of death. Thus between evening and evening Moses and his people "kept the passover, and the sprinkling of blood, lest He that destroyed the firstborn should touch *them*" (Heb. xi. 28); and the Master, prefigured alike by the slain lamb and the "Angel of the way," more than 1,500 years afterwards, *on the same 14th night of the month Nisan*, directed the passover to be prepared for himself and His disciples. In the course of that night, HIMSELF, the Archetype, was arrested, tried in the morning, and in the next afternoon crucified and laid in the tomb.

The last day of the sojourn in Egypt was over, the predicted 430 years from the call of Abraham complete, and in the 14th night of the month Nisan, our April, then made the first month of the Jewish year, the Lord ordained a new reckoning of time for this His peculiar people.

"This month shall be *unto you* the beginning of months; it shall be the first month of the year *to you*." (Ex. xii. 2.)

And now, elected by most wonderful love to be a "peculiar treasure" above all people, a "kingdom of priests" and a holy nation, they began their journey as on "eagles' wings." (Ex. xix. 4.)

"Oh, Jacob, saith the Lord, I am the Holy One of Israel, thy Saviour: I gave Egypt for thy ransom, Ethiopia and Seba for thee." (Isa. xliii. 3.)

They were to set forth on wilderness travel where the Lord would "furnish their table," where pure

* The accompanying sketch was made by Miss Whateley from life studies in Egypt.

crystal water would burst from the rock for them, and make streams in the desert; the "doors of heaven would be opened," and the "corn of heaven" rained down on THEM, even "angels' food;" or as the margin reads, "the bread of the mighty" (Ps. lxxviii. 25). It was like coriander seed, white, "a small round thing, as small as the hoar-frost on the ground; in taste like wafers made with honey." If they had been content with this ethereal yet substantial aliment, this corn of heaven, they would have known no disease. It was promised—

"The Lord shall bless thy bread and thy water, and I will take away sickness from the midst of thee." (Ex. xxiii. 25.)

They were to be exempt from "the diseases of Egypt;" and as they began this miracle journey, the Lord pointed their eyes to their Leader.

"Behold I send an ANGEL before thee, to keep thee in the way, and to bring thee into the place which I have prepared.

"Beware of Him, and obey His voice, provoke Him not; for He will not pardon your transgressions: for my name is in Him." (Ex. xxiii. 20, 21.)

God had spoken of His "NAME" to Moses from the burning bush in answer to the question:

"They shall say unto me, What is his name? What shall I say unto them?

"And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM: and he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you.

"And God said moreover unto Moses, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, The Lord God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, hath sent me unto you: this is my name for ever, and this is my memorial unto all generations." (Ex. iii. 13—15.)

Surely into this "NAME" then, into its meaning, all generations should look—that vast I AM, conveyed the idea of the DIVINE PRESENCE, in all things *past*, and all things *future*. The invisible

Presence of which the heathen had made their vain symbols, in Egypt and Assyria, was the "Eternal Presence" with that people Israel—type of his spiritual people for ever. Our translators render this name JEHOVAH, but the Jews call it, "The unutterable word." Their historian, Josephus, says that the name was so sacred that it was forbidden to be used, except once in the year before the mercy seat. He adds, that the true mode of pronouncing it was lost, and the Hebrew now in use among the Jews is considerably altered from the time when Moses wrote; the modern Jews never use the word Jehovah, but speak of "Adonai" Lord, in its stead. They had a *superstitious* reverence for it, and have still; they thought it capable of working miracles, and desired to keep it hidden from the heathen. Deep students of Old Testament Scripture say it ought to be written "YAHVEH," or "He who will be," the name of promise to the chosen nation—of the Christ who would come to fulfil *all* Old Testament prophecies. Paul declares this to be the *end* or *sum* of the conversation and teaching of the Apostles: "JESUS CHRIST, the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever." And our Redeemer Himself conveys to us *His own* rendering of His unutterable name, in the benignant message of Rev. i. 4, through the beloved disciple John:—

"Grace be unto you, and peace, from him which is, and which was, and which is to come."

And now the Lord placed the sea between "the people" and their enemies. "Their persecutors thou threwest into the deeps, as a stone into the mighty waters" (Neh. ix. 11). This was the miracle that crowned all the other ten. The firstborn of Egypt had perished, but the burial alive of her peers and her princes must here attest the power of Jehovah,

and humble the pride of the kingdom whose Pharaoh had defied "the Holy One of Israel."

How is the crossing described in the song of Moses?

"With the blast of thy nostrils the waters were gathered together.
The floods stood upright as an heap;
The depths were congealed in the heart of the sea.
The enemy said: I will pursue, I will overtake, I will divide the spoil.
I will draw my sword, my hand shall destroy them.
Thou didst blow with thy wind; the sea covered them;
They sank as lead in the mighty waters."

(Ex. xv. 8—10.)

And thus they set forth on their way to Sinai—to the mountains of Horeb where Moses had fed his flocks, and where the Lord had met him, and told him his people should serve God "on that mountain." We give you a picture, not of the monkish Sinai on which the Roman emperor Justinian built a convent 600 years after Christ, but of the five-peaked Serbal, which has, as many believe, greater claims to be considered the mountain of the Law-giving. This is not a point on which all are agreed, and the exact position of the sacred spots of earth are almost all contested, in order, perhaps, that no place should be the object of a vain and idolatrous worship.

Henceforth this wonderful people, going forth into the desert through those crystal walls of water, had no sooner experienced hunger, than bread was rained from heaven for them, and the bitter spring of the wilderness was sweetened for their sake. This spring is still existing, and is called *Ain Howara*, the bitter well. They crossed over in one night from Africa to Asia, left the desolate and despoiled land of Egypt, and came out into the free desert,

to serve the Lord their God among mountain ranges of wild and awful grandeur. Eye-witnesses have thus described them.

"I stand," says one traveller, "upon one of the peaks of Sinai, where Moses stood when he talked with the Almighty. Can this naked rock have been indeed the witness of that great interview between man and his Creator, on the morning that was ushered in with terrible thunders and lightnings, with the thick clouds resting on the mountain's brow? Yes! This is the holy mountain; and no fitter place on all the earth could have been chosen, for the manifestation of Divine power. I have stood on the summit of the giant Etna, and looked over the clouds floating beneath it,—upon the bold scenery of Sicily. I have climbed Vesuvius, and looked down upon the waves of lava, and the ruined and half-recovered cities at its foot: but these are nothing compared to the terrific solitude and bleak majesty of Sinai. It is a perfect sea of desolation. Not a tree, or shrub, or blade of grass is to be seen upon the bare and rugged sides of innumerable mountains, heaving their naked summits to the skies; while the crumbling masses of granite around, and the distant view of the Syrian desert, with its boundless waste of sands, form the wildest and most dreary, the most terrific and desolate picture the imagination can conceive."

Other travellers describe the view from the summit of Serbal as the grandest, though the most desolate, to be found upon the earth's surface. The eastern-most and highest peak is ascended by a mighty flight of rock stairs which wind round its shoulder.

WADY FEIRAN IN ARABIA.

THE TIMES WHEN THE PENTATEUCH BEGAN TO BE WRITTEN.

FROM EGYPT TO SINAI.

No. VII.

It is well for us who can look back upon the life of Moses from the heights of the New Testament days. The last time he is named in Scripture is more than 1500 years after his death, in the Revelation of Jesus Christ unto the Apostle John. The song of Moses, "the servant of God," is sung on the "sea of glass," to "harps of gold," with a yet greater song, "the song of the Lamb," "the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world." The song is thus summed up in the book of Revelation (xv. 3, 4):—

"Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints. Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name? for thou only art holy: all nations shall come and worship before thee; for thy judgments are made manifest."

This is also the spirit of the song in Exodus xv., when God's judgments were made manifest on Egypt, and when "all nations" were Moab and Edom, and Canaan and Assyria. Those who sing the song of Moses must be the children of Israel. (See Rev. xiv. 3; and vii. 4.)

Let us now go back to his first song. We have seen how the Israelites entered the Red Sea as a nation of slaves, and emerged from it as free men,

for their oppressors lay all "dead on the sea shore," and we must now follow them in their pilgrimage, after their song of triumph in the 15th chapter of Exodus.

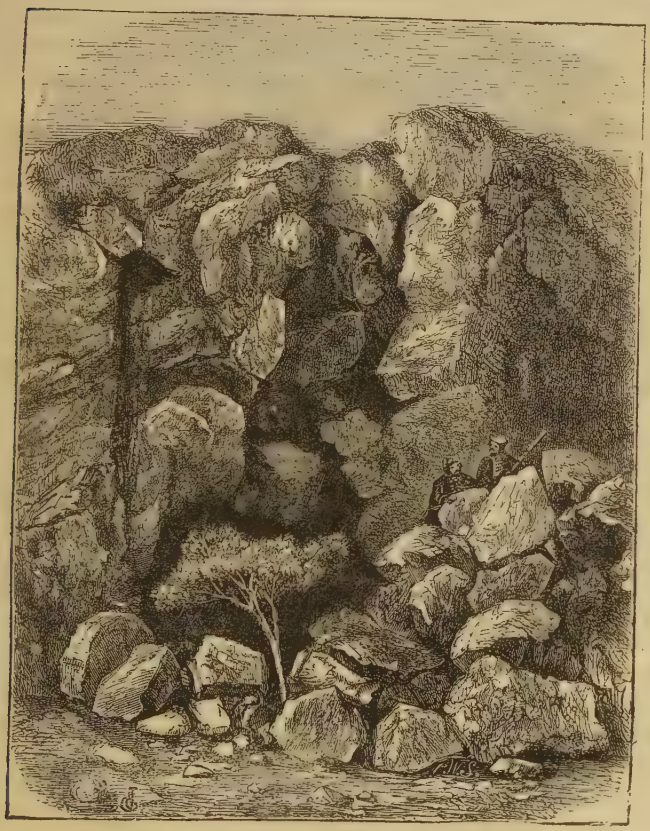
We hear but of *three* songs in the wilderness: the song after crossing the Red Sea, the song of the well at Beer-sheba, and the song before the ascent of Nebo. There are thirty-nine years between the first and the last song of praise. We complain, as "the people" did, oftener than we give thanks, during the process of *our* training in the wilderness, and while the Egyptian in our characters is dying out under God's discipline; but when the lesson is taught us to say in all things, "Not our will, but thine be done," we are near to the Promised Land. We have to learn to draw water from the wells of salvation, and the way to do this is to betake ourselves diligently to the study of God's holy Word. We must dig into that well, from whence all the streams of truth flow. It is not enough to know from the Scriptures merely the way of life. They must be *searched* for those truths that lie deeper beneath their surface.

Have we not observed that Christians whose minds are occupied by the study of God's Word, and who are patiently digging into it, are the happiest and most fruitful Christians? Their "hearts are enlarged," they will seldom be offended or perplexed about their own frames and feelings; they are drinking of the living water that springs up as they dig. Most of the evils within us and around us, arise from our PARTIAL knowledge of the Word of God.

We must realize "the people" as a whole nation encamped on the Egyptian side of the Red Sea, in Wady Tarawik, or "The Valley of the Nocturnal Travellers." Here is commemorated by its Arabic

name "the night" of Exod. xii. 42; that night of the Lord to be observed of all the children of Israel in their generations.

Captain Moresby has laid down Wady Tarawik in his chart as Wady Mousa, corresponding with "Ayun Mousa," the wells on the opposite coast.



AYUN MOUSA, THE WELLS OF MOSES.

Here is a sketch of Ayun Mousa, or the Wells of Moses, by Miss Whateley, during her stay in Cairo.

"When I asked our sheikh," says Dr. Wilson, "if this name was correct, he said, 'This is indeed the path of our Lord Moses.'" The Wady Tarawik, or Mousa, is eighteen miles in length—the only level and open space in which two millions of people with their tents and flocks could encamp, in order to enter the sea at one given time, and march across the uncovered gulf like a vast army, intent on reaching the opposite shore, without the loss of a needless hour.

We are told that there are on the Arabian side of the sea, six "wadys," or landing places, facing Wady Tarawik:—1. Ayun Mousa. 2. Wady Reiyaneh, derived from *ar rani*, "the people," THE VALLEY OF THE PEOPLE. 3. Wady Kurdhiyeh, from *Kardah*, THE VALLEY OF THE CONGREGATION. 4. Wady el Ahtha, from *ati atiu*, "a pilgrim," THE VALLEY OF THE PILGRIMS. 5. Wady Sudr, from *sadar*, OUT OF THE WATER, "a road leading men up from the water." 6. Wady Wardan, from *wardun*, THE VALLEY OF DESCENT INTO THE WATER.

"Can these local names," it is asked, "facing the very scene of the Scripture miracle, have come together by chance? Can the Scripture terms, the 'People,' the 'Pilgrims,' occur on the very scene of the Exode, yet have no reference to God's people Israel?"

The map of the desert in which the Israelites wandered for forty years, is now presented to you, it includes a region of but about 160 miles long and 130 broad, a space much smaller than Scotland or Ireland, and if you turn to the map on page 14, you will see this same region represented only as a tiny corner of the wide country of Arabia.

33°
34°
35°
MEDITERRANEAN SEA
JUDEA
JERUSALEM
Ascalon
GAZA
Hebron
Beersheba
DESERT
AIN EL WEIBAH OR KADESH
Mt. Hor
WADI ARABAH
Akabah
DESERT OF THE TIH
SUEZ
Ayun Musa
W. Ridan
W. Sudr
W. Wardan
W. Amrah
Ras Sudr
Gebel et Tih
W. Kuseimah
SARBUT EL KHADEM
HAZEROTH
W. Feiran
W. Aleyat
W. Sebaiyeh
C. MOUSA
C. RATHERIN
TUR
JUM SHOMER
GULF OF SUEZ
GULF OF AKABAH
ARABIAN DESERT
MAP OF SINAI AND THE UPPER DESERT
30
29
28

"Ayun Mousa," says Miss Whateley, "is supposed by many to be the first well at which they drank after thus crossing the sea. Marah was three days' journey from the coast, and they could not have gone three days without drinking; and it is not unlikely, as this well is only a very short distance from the place where they must have crossed, that they stopped and filled their water-skins and pitchers, and with that aid reached 'Marah;' for it is only on arriving *there* that we hear that they murmured.

"From Ayun Mousa we pass to Wady Shudh, probably the same as the wilderness of Shur."

"Moses brought Israel from the Red Sea, and they went out into the wilderness of Shur."—Ex. xv. 22.

And now then began the "great and terrible wilderness," with its towering mounds of rough sand, its stupendous precipices of half-baked rocks, and in the distance wild brown spectral mountains. These were the "ragged rocks" (Isa. ii. 21), with their summits of spikes or tall spires, and their vast sides furrowed by enormous quarries, dug side by side in succession for miles—"a land of deserts and of PITS" (Jer. ii. 6). The limestone ranges of the Tih, so near the Valley of the Nile, furnished the stones that built the pyramids.

In this wilderness Israel soon began to hunger and thirst; and even after the healing of the bitter waters of Marah, and the refreshment of the twelve wells of water, and the seventy palm trees of Elim, at the expiration of the first fortnight they murmured a second time, saying,

"Would God we had died by the hand of the Lord in the land of Egypt! When we sat by the fleshpots, and when we did eat bread to the full." (Ex. xvi. 3.)

They forgot it had been the bread of suffering and slavery, and oh! how undeservedly did God reply to this "murmuring" with the mercy of the "manna," and thereby teach them afresh the law of His Sabbath which had been first instituted in Eden. They were to gather up a double portion of this sustenance on the sixth day for the seventh. The prophet Ezekiel, in referring to the early portion of their history, records the words of Jehovah, "I gave them My Sabbaths to be a sign between Me and them" (Ezek. xx. 12), and in the same chapter it is *four* times mentioned.

"My Sabbaths they greatly polluted....for their eyes were after their fathers' idols."

But they were on their way to the mountain of the Law-giving, and having murmured and received the manna in the wilderness of Sin, it is said they pitched next in Rephidim, and that there was no water for the people to drink; and again they chide with Moses, saying,

"Wherefore is this that thou hast brought us up out of Egypt to kill us and our children and our cattle with thirst?" (Exod. xvii. 3.)

We have scarcely an idea in the cool countries of the West what thirst like theirs could be.

"It is impossible to conceive the weariness" (says Bartlett in his "Forty Days in the Desert") "that is felt by the solitary wanderer in this great and terrible wilderness. Ravine succeeds to ravine, with its bed of sand or gravel, overhung with mountains, whose bold, awful, abrupt forms, with their colouring of brown, black, red, and yellow, glare under the fiery sun like a portion of some early world untenanted by man. The silent footfall of the camel passes noiselessly from morn to night among the voiceless crags. It is then we remem-

ber and realize the incidents of Israel's toilsome march, and understand their horror at being transported from verdant Egypt into the heart of solitudes so deep.

> 'So lonely 'tis that God Himself
> Scarce seemeth there to be.'

"How blissful is the sudden change to WADY FEIRAN! 'Most like a poet's dream' it burst upon us. The cliffs around still towering indeed bare and perpendicular, but instead of a gravelly valley there arose as by enchantment tufted groves of palm and fruit trees. Presently a stream of running water led us on to the shade and the verdure of the Valley of Feiran.

"There in the heart of the wilderness of rock and sand, when weary of the stunted bush and nauseous scanty pool, I pitched my tent beneath a group of palms which bent to shelter it; the spring came down the valley, and, rippling among green sedges, formed a small transparent basin at the foot of a fragment of limestone rock fallen from the mountain wall above, and was decorated like a natural altar with freshest foliage. The camels were scattered about the bowery thickets, cropping the thick blossom with avidity, and the Arabs revelled around.

"My oasis of palms was not a solitary group. On stepping out from my tent I was in an almost tropical wilderness. In the palm groves of Egypt the stumps are trimmed and straight, but here this most graceful of trees is all untended; its boughs spring direct from the earth, and form tufts and avenues and over-arching bowers, through which sunlight falls tremblingly on the shaded turf. Among them some few branches shooting upright,

lift high above the rest their lovely coronal of rustling fans and glowing branches of dates. Some droop to the ground like wavy plumes, others form mossy alleys resounding with the songs of birds. The wind plays over the rustling foliage with the gentlest murmurs; fig, pomegranate, and acacia mingle their foliage with the palm, and here in its season is seen the waving corn. Where else did Israel grow the corn that was ordered, in Lev. ii. 14, to be offered with their meat-offerings to the Lord?

"Now for the ownership and sole possession of such a stream, was it not probable that the sons of the desert would speedily strive?

"'Then came Amalek,' says Moses, 'and fought with Israel in Rephidim,' Exod. xvii. 8."

There *was* an ancient Amalek race for whom we may look back as early as Abram's time (Gen. xiv. 7), and it is said they were descended from HAM, but a second race so called were descended from Esau, Jacob's brother; and there would have been quite time for the multiplication of this race into a warlike host in 150 years ere they fought Israel in Rephidim, as we find that in the same period the tribe of Ephraim could muster 40,500 fighting men (Num. i. 33). Amalek is spoken of in Judges as in connection with Moab and Midian; and "all the children of the east, lying in the valley like grasshoppers for multitude, and their camels as the sand of the sea." They seem to have followed Israel out of the wilderness of Sin, and fallen upon their rear while the foremost were pressing towards the newborn flood. "He met thee by the way," says Moses afterwards to Israel (Deut. xxv. 18), "and smote the hindmost of thee, even all that were feeble behind thee. When thou wast faint and

weary, and he feared not God. . . . . Therefore thou shalt blot out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven."

In the prophecy of Obadiah it is said of Edom, or Esau (the grandfather of Amalek),

"For thy violence against thy brother Jacob shame shall cover thee, and thou shalt be cut off for ever....."

In the first battle of Israel with their enemies success appears to have depended entirely on Moses, who watched the strife from a neighbouring hill, with the rod of God in his hand (Exod. xvii. 8, 13). On the appeal to Divine power, symbolized by the lifting of that rod, everything rested.

There exists a remarkable lonely hill, called Jebel Muthbah, overlooking the valley of Feiran, (which is supposed to be the scriptural Rephidim) at the point where Wady Natet and Wady Feiran join, and which would answer exactly to the hill where Moses sat, while Aaron and Hur held up his weary hands. The broad plain below, is said by Dr. Stewart, who has seen it, to be just fitted for a battle field; and on its borders he saw cairns or heaps of stones thrown together, which, according to the Arabs, are very ancient—and they were accustomed to call them, in their language, "The graves of the Jews," though Stewart thinks them quite as likely to have been the graves of Amalek, here defeated by the prayer of Moses and the early prowess of Joshua.

Dr. Stewart journeyed on through the countless windings of the valley, thinking of that hill of prayer, and how the stream from the smitten rock must have run down this valley towards the thirsty, murmuring crowds; and that along it old Jethro brought his daughter and his grandsons to

restore them to the leader of the Lord's hosts. He pressed onward to the site of the old city of Feiran, which was a place of great importance about 500 years after Christ, and for many centuries afterwards; being the seat of a bishop and the abode of a Christian population long ere the patronage of a Roman emperor bade Ghebel Mousa to be considered the true Sinai, and when SERBAL was reckoned the "Mount of God."

There is no mention of the name of Feiran in Scripture, but there *is* of "Paran," which is considered, by the best geographers to be the old form of the same.

"Wady Feiran (or Paran) cannot be Rephidim," say some, "for there must always have been water here," and

"In Rephidim there was no water for the people to drink."

Yet was it not surely once the waterless waste which the 17th chapter of Exodus describes it? and are we not told of the time when the streams which have nursed the palm groves of this noble oasis *first sprang into being?* We can look for the evidence in the Book of Psalms.

See Ps. cv. 41:—

"He opened the rock: and the waters gushed out: they ran in the dry places like a river."

In Ps. lxxviii. 15, 16:—

"He clave the rocks in the wilderness, and gave them drink as out of the great depths.

"He brought streams also out of the rock, and caused waters to run down like rivers."

The latter part of Psalm cvii. relates exclusively to Israel in the wilderness, and its record is as follows:—

"He maketh the wilderness a standing water,
And water springs of a dry ground;
And there He setteth the hungry,
That they may build them a city to dwell in:
That they may sow their land and plant vineyards,
To yield them fruits of increase."

"Now Wady Feiran is attested to be the only spot in the Sinai desert where water-springs run like rivers; where an ancient city exists, or ever did exist; or where corn did, or ever could grow."

Do we not read the history of its miraculous source in Exod. xvii. in the hour when God said, "*I will stand before thee there upon the rock in Horeb.* Take with thee the elders of Israel, and thy rod wherewith thou smotest the river; take it in thine hand and go." Was not this the converse miracle to that of the Red Sea? The Lord bound the sea by the rod of Moses, and made a dry path through its billows, and again He burst rocky bars, and let flow "the fountain of Israel," which Paul tells us followed them in them in their wanderings, a type of Christ; they doubtless returned to its refreshing borders and also to the neighbouring Wady Hebron for many parts of the thirty-eight years during which they did *not* journey to the Promised Land—and in this time each of them who was older than twenty when he came out of Egypt, except Joshua and Caleb, found a grave in the scorching sands.

It is certain, from Deut. ix. 21, that "a running brook descended out of Mount Horeb" after Moses had smitten it, and that this brook became a broad stream in the valley beneath, upon whose waters Moses cast the dust of the golden calf, and which gave space for all the children of Israel to drink of the waters thus sprinkled. The stream of Wady Feiran runs now for six miles through the valley.

And upon that fertile valley (the Arab paradise of palms) the five rugged spires of SERBAL still

frown down in their magnificence. The Israelites appear to have left the borders of the stream and gone on to the desert of Sinai (Ex. xix. 2), and then Israel camped before the mount. The "wilderness of Sinai" would mean the desert plain around the mountain, whichever mountain the true Sinai might be.

"From Wady Feiran," says Dr. Stewart, "we turned to the right into Wady Aleyat, which leads directly up to the base of Serbal. I should reckon the length of this valley to be about four miles, and there is ample space to have contained the tents of all the tribes of Israel. It is one vast chaos of ruins, of rocks precipitated from the face of the mountain above by some great convulsion of nature. The face of the perpendicular summit towers 2000 feet in height above this mountain valley. From every part of the Wady Aleyat, SERBAL can be seen; there are no projecting spurs to hide his summits; the precipitous sides rise clear from the rough ground, and the propriety of the inspired description is fully realized, 'the mount that might be touched.'"

These "avalanches" of rock and stone have now so covered Wady Aleyat as to suggest the idea that the clouds must have some time rained down boulders instead of hailstones. Yet it is not deficient in verdure, and scattered over its surface also are the Saut or *Shittah* trees of Scripture, "not one of which trees," says Dr. Stewart, "are found in the plain of El Rahah, or in the Wadys round Gebel Mousa."

There are those who see in these appearances "the standing result and evidence of the shock which the mountain experienced at the GIVING OF THE LAW," when Scripture tells us it was shaken to its foundations—"And the whole mount quaked greatly" (Exod. xix. 18). This must have resembled an earthquake, yet there are no signs of volcanic agency throughout the region. "The

earth trembled and shook" (Ps. lxxvii. 18), says the Psalmist long afterwards, in reference to the events of the Exodus; and the witness of Paul follows (Heb. xii. 26), "Whose voice then shook the earth." "The shivered rocks are thrown down by Him," says the prophet Nahum (i. 6). If a certainty of the locality of the Law-giving is still recoverable by actual record in Scripture signs, MOUNT SERBAL IS THE TRUE MOUNT SINAI.

Now let us see what Scripture says about Paran. It mentions Mount Paran and the wilderness of Paran as distinct from the wilderness of Sin on the Edom side, and the wilderness of Shur on the Egypt side of the desert. It was therefore probably more central, and concluded to be the wilderness of El Tih, fronting the ranges of the Horeb mountains—that arid table land of limestone, "that great and terrible wilderness" of Deut. i. 19.

But what does Scripture say of *Mount* Paran? Different travellers, who have only been able to undertake the fatigue and expense of going up one or other of the mountains claiming to be *the true Sinai*, are likely each to suppose it the one they ascended. But God speaks of "Mount Paran"; and if Wady Feiran be Wady Paran, the Mount Paran of Scripture probably looks down upon it, as Serbal does upon Feiran. Moses himself thus far supplies information (Deut. xxxiii. 2):—

"And he said, The Lord came from Sinai, and rose up from Seir unto them; He shined forth from Mount Paran, and He came with ten thousands of saints: from His right hand went a fiery law for them. Yea, He loved the people; all His saints are in thy hand: and they sat down at thy feet; every one shall receive of thy words."

The prophet Habakkuk says (chap. iii. 3—6):

"God came from Teman, and the Holy One from Mount Paran. Selah. His glory covered the heavens, and the earth

was full of His praise. And His brightness was as the light; He had horns coming out of His hand: and there was the hiding of His power. Before Him went the pestilence, and burning coals went forth at His feet. He stood, and measured the earth: He beheld, and drove asunder the nations; and the everlasting mountains were scattered, the perpetual hills did bow: His ways are everlasting."

There is yet one remarkable feature of this region to notice, which in a very singular manner illustrates the first recorded journey of the Israelites in the wilderness.

All along the line of march you see marked on the map—and *only in that line*, as far as we know at present—there are certain mysterious writings on the rocks, which have excited the attention of travellers from the time of Cosmas, who noticed them about 500 years after Christ. Their *age* and *meaning* are still supposed to be a great problem, but their existence is unquestioned. Cosmas called them Hebrew inscriptions, and considered they had been preserved "for the sake of unbelievers" in Moses. They remained unnoticed till the present century, when Professor Beer of Germany rejected the idea of Cosmas, and supposed them to belong to a little before or after the time of Christ, and to have been made by Nabatheans (Esau's descendants), early Christians or Pagans—by any hands but those of Israel.

The general sense, as rendered by Professor Beer, is as follows:

"Omai, son of Wâl, desires that he may be remembered."

Or,

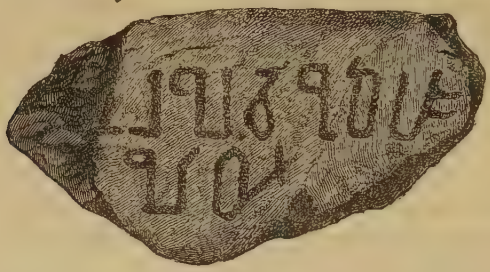
"Let be remembered for good Aus(u), the son of Hers(u)."

Or,

"Peace be to—so and so."

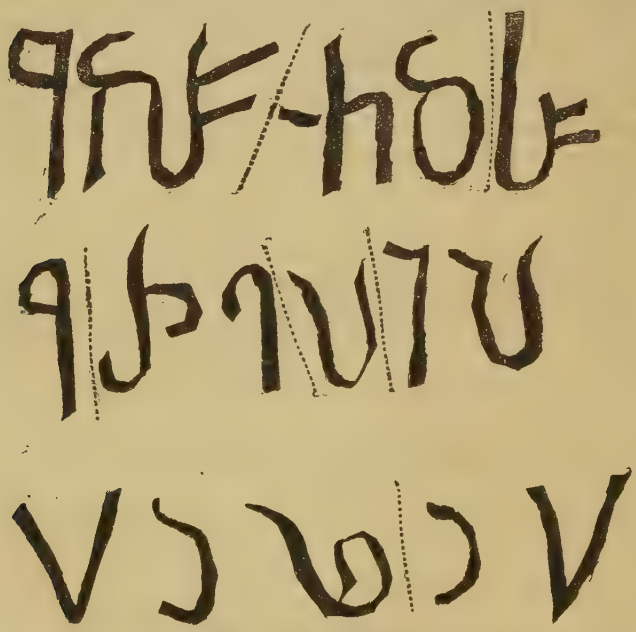
You may see a specimen of these characters on a

fragment of red sandstone on the shelves of the Egyptian Gallery of the British Museum.



SINAITIC INSCRIPTION IN THE BRITISH MUSEUM.

And here is one on a larger scale—a specimen of 470 similar inscriptions which the French Government caused to be moulded in plaster by M. Lottin de Laval, from the rocks themselves, in the year 1856, and which therefore must be accurate.



SINAITIC INSCRIPTION.

Let us notice where these writings are found. Commencing near Suez, the Wadys Wardan, Maghara, Mokatteb, Feiran, and Aleyat, are all full of them—Mokatteb especially, which means "*The Written Valley*"; so is "Wady Aleyat," which leads up to the five-peaked SERBAL, whose two easternmost summits are covered with them also. They are found on the second peak from the west, on the top of the third or central peak, and innumerable inscriptions clothe the northern side of the mountain.

They are written upon hundreds of the fallen stones in Wady Aleyat, so that it seems as if every second stone was inscribed. They are on blocks of trapstone, black on the surface, but lemon-coloured inside; and the black surface throws out the lemon-coloured characters.

It is very remarkable that no inscriptions are found either on Gebel Mousa or on Mount St. Catherine.

What do they mean? The Rev. Charles Forster, a clergyman of the Church of England, has spent years in attempting to decipher them; and by means of old Arabic, Ethiopic, and Hebrew alphabets, he thinks he reads them, and has written three books upon them; one book he dedicates to the Archbishop of Canterbury.

The two first characters on the right hand of each of the specimens we have given you on p. 136 he considers to mean "THE PEOPLE." They are very often repeated everywhere.

On the smaller stone Mr. Forster reads—

"The People kicketh like an Ass;
The People drives to the water JEHOVAH."

And on the larger—

"Causes to descend into the deep valley, MOSES, the Tribes

"Leader of the way—he causes to descend into the deep the young ostrich, the sea foaming
"Divides it asunder, power given him by GOD."

A great number of the inscriptions are attended by a rough drawing of the event or circumstance to which they allude. "The People," "the Tribes," are most often depicted as a restive camel, a wild ass, a wild goat, headstrong and kicking; and are described as reviling, murmuring, or greedy. Unlike the vainglorious Egyptians, from whom they came out, who never recorded their own defects, the whole scope of this rock-witness (if read aright by Mr. Forster) is one extensive epitaph on the generation who fell in the wilderness—the fathers of the race who, better trained and desert-bred, attained the Promised Land. The following is the tenor of the translation given to many of the inscriptions:—

"The people, the Hebrews, lusting after Egypt, fall into commotion."

"The people, a yearling wild ass—headstrong, mindless, and mad."

"The people raileth, reviling, cursing aloud, a braying ass, vociferous."

"The people, a lean, emaciated she-camel, goes forth into the desert a roarer—a she-camel with a murmuring mouth."

"The people devour greedily and enormously."

"Roars the huge unbroken she-camel, angering JEHOVAH. Rebellious in the burning desert."

"Subdued by thirst, the high-humped she-camel speeds with long steps."

A very large number of the inscriptions also bear testimony to the grand miracles of the EXODUS:—

PASSING THROUGH THE RED SEA.

"The sea enters by night the people; the sea, and the waves roaring."

"Divideth asunder the leader the sea, its waves roaring. Enter and pass through the midst of the waters, the people."

"The people pass quickly over through terror, like a horse; the soft wet mud at the bottom of the sea."

"Weep for their dead, the enemies; the virgins wailing. The sea pouring down, overwhelmed them; let loose to reflow the waters."

"Fleeth the people; descend into the deep the tribes. Enter the waters, the people."

"The people enter, and penetrate through the midst."

"The people are filled with stupor and mental perturbation, JEHOVAH although their keeper and companion."

WATER FROM THE ROCK.

Numbers of the writings are said to refer to the gift of water from the rock:—

"The people the hard stone satiates with water, thirsting."

"The hard rock water—a great miracle."

"The people wending on their way drink, drinking with prone mouth, gives them to drink again and again, JEHOVAH."

"The people in the waterless desert, swill drinking again and again, the people a roarer, the water flowing in the desert, drink like the camel in one long draught."

Mr. Forster's translations, however, though very interesting, are not universally believed in. That the inscriptions *exist* is certain, and on the route of the journey of Israel as described in the Book of Exodus; and therefore we have told you of them.

A learned Jew of the present day makes the following remarks on these inscriptions as alluded to in Scripture:—

"There is a remarkable and interesting episode in the sacred narrative of Num. xi. 25—30. When the Spirit of the Lord had been poured out upon the seventy elders, they went up to the tabernacle to prophesy, two out of their number remaining behind —Eldad and Medad—though the Spirit it is said, rested upon them also, 'and *they were of them that were written*.' This phrase is confessedly obscure.

It has been understood to refer to certain tickets or tablets inscribed by Moses with the word 'elder,' and given to each of the seventy as their passport to office."

This learned Jew, to whom of course Hebrew is a native tongue, discovers in the phrase in question a reference to the Sinaitic inscriptions. For the rendering, "They were of them that were written," he would substitute the following, which he says is the *literal* translation of the words: "They were among the cthoobeem, or inscriptions."

"On examining what different travellers have written about the locality of those inscriptions," says Dr. Margoliouth, "I am convinced that Eldad and Medad were then, in that famous region, at the awfully memorable place Kibroth-hataavah, one of the spots where the inscriptions are found."

These curious writings make one think of Job (chap. xix., vers. 23, 24), when we read:

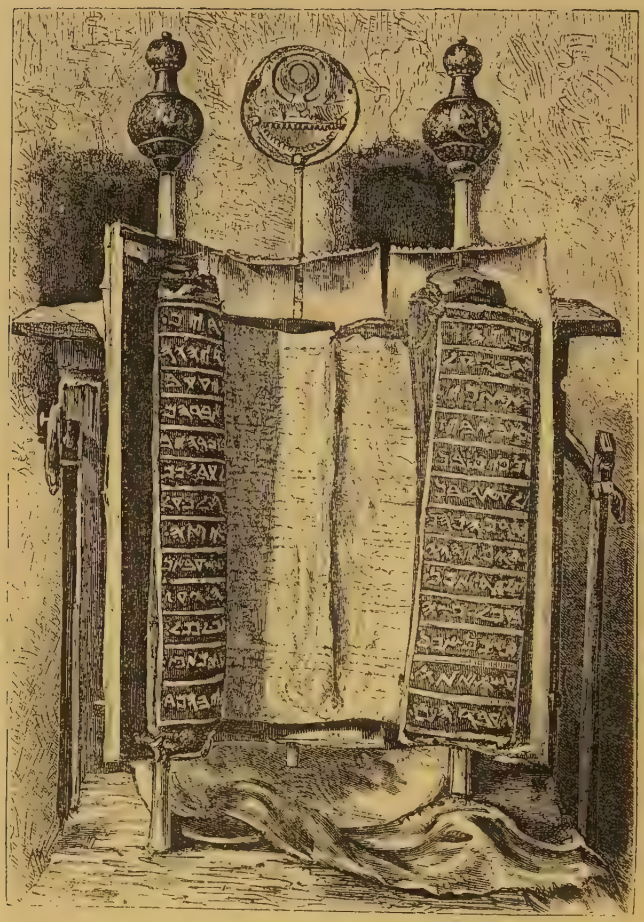
"Oh that my words were now written!....that they were *graven* with an *iron pen* and lead in the rock for ever!"

And Jeremiah xvii. 1, which says:

"The sin of Judah is written with a pen of iron and with the point of a diamond" (or nails, as the margin reads).

If the age of Job is admitted—and he alludes to such writings—why may not these inscriptions be as old as the hieroglyphs of idolatrous Egypt?

Their numbers are computed by thousands, their extent by miles, and they are often placed fathoms, not feet, above the valley floors. How can they have been the pastime of chance pilgrims or travellers? And if they are the work of the Nabatheans, it is very strange that the great mass of them is found on the *Egyptian* side of the peninsula, in the very route of the Israelitish wanderings as recorded by Moses.



SAMARITAN PENTATEUCH.

THE TIMES WHEN THE PENTATEUCH BEGAN TO BE WRITTEN.

THE GIVING OF THE LAW ON MOUNT SINAI.

No. VIII.

NEVER yet in the history of the world has such another scene been recorded as we find in the 19th chapter of Exodus, when all Israel were assembled in the desert plain before the Mount Sinai, alone with God—with GOD, who had proved to them that HE was the only God, and that *they* were His chosen people.

He had divided the very sea to let them pass into that secret shrine of His presence, and by the natural grandeur of such a miracle had prepared their minds to listen to His mighty words from heaven. The writings of an ancient people remain upon the rocks that witnessed that solemn interview between Jehovah and the trembling sons of men—if Aleyat is the wilderness, and Serbal the Sinai; but we are not yet infallibly assured *who* were the writers, and the *certainty* of the reading is also lost.

On the other hand, there were two Tables of Stone, which were actually "graven" by the finger of God; and though these remain *not*, or have been

hidden for ages from mortal sight,* yet the LAW they embodied is certain and true, and is set before the eyes of all nations, in every language into which the books of Moses have been rendered.

Our Lord Jesus, when in the fulness of time He appeared upon the earth, the Jehovah of the wilderness, "taking upon Him the form of a servant," referred to those two tables of the Law, and revealed to a later age the whole spirit and meaning of His *Ten* Commandments, when He simplified them for His disciples into *two*.

"Jesus said unto him" (the lawyer who asked which was the greatest commandment) "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.

"This is the first and great commandment.

"And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.

"On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets."

Now all the words of men may perish, but "the word of the Lord endureth for ever."

* The Book of Maccabees is one of the Apocryphal, or non-inspired books, which are not included in our common English Bible, but which contain, however, very valuable portions of Jewish history during the 400 years that lie between the closing of the last inspired book of the Old Testament by the prophet Malachi and the Gospel narrative of St. Matthew in the New Testament. In the 2nd chapter of the 2nd book of Maccabees, it is written that the prophet Jeremiah, "being warned of God, "came forth from Jerusalem to the mountain where Moses went "up and saw the inheritance of God" (viz., Nebo, or Pisgah). "And when Jeremiah came thither he found a hollow cave; and "he carried in thither the tabernacle and the ark, and the altar "of incense, and stopped the door. Then some of them that "followed him came up to mark the place, but they could not "find it. And Jeremiah blamed them, saying, The place shall "be unknown till God gather together the Congregation of the "People and receive them to mercy: and then the Lord will "shew these things." (See p. 158 of this Tract.)

Those two Tables were an all-comprehending code of duty to God and duty to man; and on this Law, given by God to Moses, *all* law (worth the name), in *all* countries, has more or less been founded.

The first table, containing the *first four* and longest commandments were meant to separate God's people Israel from the heathen corrupters of the truth which Noah taught at Shinar:—

"Thou shalt have no other gods before Me."

This had been taught in the ten plagues wherewith the Lord had overcome Pharaoh; and the first commandment is introduced by the reminder—

"I am the Lord thy God, that brought thee out of the house of bondage."

The second commandment of God relates also to Himself, and declares His jealousy of His people bowing down to any graven image or likeness of a god, which it was the habit of the heathen nations to make and to worship.

The third commandment forbade the irreverent use of His own Holy Name. The people were to fear (as Moses again tells them — Deut. xxviii. 18) that glorious and fearful name, "The Lord thy God," and forbear to utter it lightly, or "to take that name in vain."

Having thus fenced off His Name, the fourth commandment of God concerns His Day—one day in seven. All nations count their time by periods of seven days, which is a most trusty voucher for the truth of Moses. The seventh day had been set apart in Eden, and was doubtless observed in the household of every holy patriarch.

It is afresh and especially mentioned in Exodus as a gift from the Lord to His people, and mentioned by Himself:—

"See, for that the Lord hath given you the Sabbath, therefore He giveth you on the sixth day the bread of two days." (Exod. xvi. 29.)

Having thus declared to Israel *first* their duty to HIMSELF, the second table—of the short commandments—begins with their consequent duty to their fellow-men. As if it had been said, "Let the man who has no god before ME—who makes no graven image, even of ME—who reverences my NAME, and thankfully observes my DAY,—let him also manifest the piety of the patriarchal age. Let him honour his father and his mother; and as regards all his fellow-men, let him tread the round of all the moral virtues, and avoid the sins of violence, of impurity, of dishonesty, of untruth, and of secret avarice and selfishness.

"Let him do no murder.
"Let him not commit adultery.
"Let him not steal.
"Let him not bear false witness.
"Let him not covet aught that is his neighbour's."

The law contained in these two tables *spans all ages*. Every child of God to this day aims to keep it, though he does not expect to be saved by doing so. "The law,"—says St. Paul—"the law was our schoolmaster to bring us to Christ." And Christ said, "Think not that I am come to destroy the law, but to fulfil."

The law of Moses chiefly met the corruption of man's heart, and sought to restrain it by a series of "*shall nots*." The first mention of "law" in the Old Testament is when Joseph made a law over the land of Egypt, that Pharaoh should have a fifth part of the harvest (Gen. xlvii. 27), but the Holy Ghost speaks, in Paul's Epistle to the Romans, of

Gentiles who having not the law did by nature some things contained in the law, showing the work of the law written in their hearts.

This is a reference surely to relics of the lost image of God in man's soul, and may apply to Noah's generation as well as that of Paul.

It is very interesting to think on what must have been the memories of the world's new fathers coming down from Ararat. They had many memories of *evil;* let us trace from the facts recorded, *how much* of God's law as given by Moses, must have been written upon their hearts and consciences.

The law of the Sabbath, the seventh day of rest, had been revealed to Adam by example, and the law of holy marriage. Shem and Japheth evidently respected the law of reverence to parents, when Ham would have had them despise Noah. Noah had been in the sight of God a "just" and an "upright" man, and, as far as he could, had commanded his household after him; therefore as knowing good from evil, he and his would have respected the laws of *truth* and the rights of *property*. They would have thought it wrong to steal, to take a neighbour's wife, to bear false witness, or to covet what was not theirs. In their hearts were written the germs of most of the commandments afterwards uttered by angels from Mount Sinai.

At the time of the new covenant with Noah a law was given with emphasis against murder, and against eating blood for food; the latter injunction being observed by the posterity of Shem at the present day.

The Apostles tell us that

"Sin is the transgression of the law." (1 John iii. 4.)

That

"Death entered into the world by sin." (Rom. iv. 12.)

And that

"Death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the likeness of Adam's transgression."

In Adam all die, and if *death* reigned, we know that *sin* reigned, not only for the sake of Adam's sin, but from the transgression by corruption and violence, of a law of purity and mercy originally written in their hearts, when they were created in the image of God. We are sure that these principles were well understood and witnessed unto, by the sons of God, and especially by the line of Seth. Though not preserved *to us* in any written code, the patriarchs, the father-rulers, must have announced them to their households, and sin was the transgression of that law.

We will now try and imagine from inspired description, the scene of the Law-giving from heaven to the people of Israel, one of the most awfully sublime in the annals of the world. King David refers to it 500 years afterwards, in his Psalm lxviii. 17:

"The chariots of God are twenty thousand, even thousands of angel: the Lord is among them, as in Sinai, in the holy place."

Moses alludes, as we have seen, to the presence of "ten thousand of saints" (Deut. xxxiii.), who must have been the redeemed of the patriarchal age. He had brought the people forth out of the camp to meet with God (xix. 17). They had departed from Rephidim, or Wady Feiran, and were "camped before the mount in the desert of Sinai (xix. 2), which was probably," (says Dr. Stewart,) "all the desert to the south of Wady Feiran."

He adds, "The two things required to fix this locality are a mountain sufficiently lofty and isolated

to be seen from the region lying round its base; and secondly, a valley or valleys among the mountains large enough to contain the tents of Israel, and visible through all their extent from the mountain top. Serbal alone is such a mountain; and Wady Aleyat and Wady Rimm run up to its very base." Wady Aleyat being four miles in length, and Serbal towering 2000 feet above it, with no projecting spurs to hide his summits, is preeminently "the mount that might be touched," as St. Paul calls it (Heb. xii. 18), and that required "bounds to be set all roundabout": for the Lord said,—

> "Whosoever toucheth the mount shall be surely put to death. There shall not an hand touch it, but he shall surely be stoned, or shot through; whether it be beast or man, it shall not live" (Ex. xix. 13).

The people "stood therefore at the nether part of the mount" (ver. 17), and it is not now the "bush," but the mountain itself that burns with the presence of the Lord. "The Lord descended upon it in fire" (ver. 18), with thunders and lightnings, and a thick cloud upon the mount; and the voice of a trumpet sounding long, and waxing louder and louder . . . and the smoke of Mount Sinai ascended as the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mount quaked greatly, as the chaos of ruins in Wady Aleyat still testify.

Dr. Stewart declares that words are too feeble to portray a thunderstorm which he experienced in that region; the "thunderbolts whose echoes were bandied from craig to craig as they rushed along the Wady, while they swept like a whirlwind among the mighty peaks above, and burst again with undiminished violence through some yawning cleft till the ground trembled with the concussion. It seemed as if all the mountains of the peninsula

were answering one another. Ever and anon a flash of lightning dispelled the pitchy darkness; then again, the crashing thunder-peals scattered their echoes to the four quarters of the heavens, and overpowered the loud howlings of the wind." This was the very scene of the "blackness and darkness and tempest," which was so terrible that it made Moses say, "I exceedingly fear and quake" (Heb. xii. 21).

And now to the sound of the trumpet was added "the voice of words," of which Moses said,—

"Did ever people hear the voice of God speaking out of the midst of the fire, as thou hast heard, and lived?" (Deut iv. 33.)

"The Lord talketh with you face to face in the mount out of the midst of the fire.

"And I stood between the Lord and you at that time, to shew you the word of the Lord: for ye were afraid by reason of the fire." (Deut. v. 4.)

The utterance of this word was by angels, according to St. Paul in Hebrews ii. 2, and in Acts vii. 53, Stephen tells his persecutors that their "fathers received the law by the disposition of angels, and have not kept it."

The law was ordained by angels, in the hand of a Mediator, and so awful was each myriad-spoken tone (Gal. iii. 19), that the people stood afar off, and Moses drew near to the thick darkness where God was (Ex. xx. 21).

The name of Moses is linked for ever with the giving of the Law. We hear in Scripture of the "law of Moses," though the children of Israel are never called the children of Moses, but the children of Abraham.

Moses is the man who was led into a closer communication with the invisible and spirit world, than was vouchsafed to any other man in the Old Testa-

ment dispensation. He was—what was he not? leader and prophet, priest and king, law-giver and poet.

There are three eras in his life of forty years:—

His first forty, in the land of Egypt.

The second forty, as a shepherd in Midian.

The third forty, as a leader of the people.

And the last forty years may again have three divisions:—

The six weeks' march from Egypt to Sinai, and the year at its base.

The thirty-eight years' wanderings from Sinai to Kadesh.

The last year of conquest of Eastern Palestine.

During all this last forty years, Moses was preserved in intimate communion with God. He knew God, not as any other prophet in a vision and a dream: "My servant Moses is not so," says the Lord (Numbers xii. 7), "with him will I speak mouth to mouth, even apparently, and not in dark speeches; and the similitude of the Lord shall he behold."

The Mussulman to this day calls him El Kelim Allah: "The spoken to by God."

This Divine speech or revelation happened, as we have seen, in four ways.—

1. In the burning bush.
2. In the thick dark thunder-cloud.
3. In the mount, on the two occasions of his forty days' fasting.
4. In the tabernacle between the Cherubim.

The book of Exodus may be divided into two parts: the historical and the legislative. The historical is comprised in the first eighteen chap-

ters. The law is given from the 19th to the 50th chapters.

The first nineteen chapters relate to—

The increase of the people.
The birth of Moses, and his education.
His Divine call and training in the desert.
The ten plagues of Egypt.
The Passover, and flight of the people.
The journey from Egypt to Sinai.
Records of Marah and Rephidim, of Amalek and Jethro, of the Manna and the Quails.

The second portion records—

The institution of the Theocracy, or government of God—over a kingdom of priests—a holy nation.
Jehovah reveals His presence on Mount Sinai, and then ordains for Himself a tabernacle, a presence-place, and an altar on earth beneath, and prescribes vestments and ordinances for His service.

He proclaims a nation of slaves, now redeemed and set apart, as representatives of the whole human race, for the service of God and as heirs of the covenant made with Abraham. This covenant contained the spiritual promise of the Messiah: who would come to redeem all nations from their sins—of which Israel lost sight, and forgot it in their national pride and vain glory.

Alas! the same book of Exodus shews ere its conclusion, that the first use to which both the people and Moses too put this law of God, was *to break it;* the people, by idolatry and licentiousness even while Moses was in the mount; and he, in indignation and haste, which it requires yet forty days more in the Divine presence, spent doubtless in utter seclusion and humiliation (but concerning

which we hear very little) entirely to mould him into the likeness of God's own forbearance with this stiff-necked people.

How solemn is the declaration of Ex. xxiv. 9, 10:—

That "then went up Moses and Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel:

"And they saw the God of Israel: and there was under his feet as it were a paved work of a sapphire stone, and as it were the body of heaven in his clearness. Also they saw God, and did eat and drink."

Now as our Lord Himself declares that "No man hath seen the Father at any time;" let us remember *who was* this Jehovah upon Sinai,—the Jehovah of the Jewish Church in the wilderness. The martyr Stephen tells us, just before his death, that *the angel* which spake to Moses in mount Sinai was none other than *the* angel of the burning bush—the angel of the Lord, who had said of Himself, "I am the God of thy fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob," before whom Moses "trembled and durst not behold" (Acts vii. 32); and also none other than the Saviour, the afterwards crucified Redeemer of the world, whose voice (says Paul, Heb. xii. 26) "then shook the earth: but now He hath promised, Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven."

Dear friends, when you have thought of Jesus taking upon Him the form of a servant, have you also thought of that Jesus as one and the same with the awful Jehovah of Sinai? At both times it is said of Him, "yet He loved the people" (Deut. xxxiii. 3), and "for His great love wherewith He loved us" (Eph. ii. 4).

It is good to go back in thought to Sinai, and to realize with deep reverence that the mighty God has actually spoken with men upon the earth.

When He had thus spoken, in majesty and fire, to the ear and eye of the favoured people, He did not intend the impression of that day to pass away: He had given them a Revelation,—a Law that was to separate them from all other people; and His words to them were to endure for ever.

From the time that they became, through Moses, the keepers of the oracles of God, *they were judged by them*, and they were expected to live by them; they became The People of the Book.

They had subscribed to the covenant; they had said, "All that the Lord hath spoken we will do." They were "under the Law"; and whenever they broke their promise, they incurred punishment and suffering, and this they continually did.

They remained before Mount Sinai a few days longer than eleven months. During this time, Jehovah made them fully understand that He was their King, and He established the regular service of His royal court by the priests and Levites. He set apart more than a fiftieth portion of the whole nation to this office. They were to receive His Law from Moses, to copy it, and to read it to the people,—not only the Ten Commandments, as written by the finger of God upon the two tables of stone, but the Book of the Covenant also, which Moses had written (Exod. xxiv. 4), and read in the audience of the people for the first time, "by the altar under the hill."

During these eleven months, their form of government in all things was appointed, their institutions established, and the Tabernacle fashioned and set up "according to the pattern shown to Moses in the mount," for the house or palace of their Divine King, who always visibly dwelt among them in the glory that was between the cherubim.

The same period witnessed their breach of the first Commandment, "Thou shalt have none other gods but me," in the worship of the golden calf, —possibly a remembrance of the Eden Cherubim— and its punishment in the death of 3000 among the people.

But we are now passing into the age when the Pentateuch began to be written. Perhaps you will like to think of the material it was written upon, and the character in which Moses wrote it. This is a piece of ancient Hebrew—the language in which the law was written—

The Bible was written by degrees, and by different persons: it took 1600 years to write. The first five books, as we have said before, are generally believed to have been written by Moses in the wilderness, as well as the book of Job; viz.:—

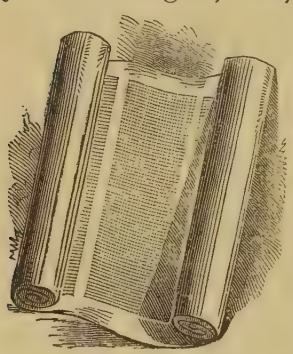
Genesis, Numbers,
Exodus, Deuteronomy,
Leviticus,

The rest of the Old Testament books, thirty-three in number, were written by different inspired leaders, prophets, priests, and kings, of Israel, but all by Israelites—the keepers of His holy oracles: and as they were written, God himself made a law that they should be read, by the Levites, to the people continually.

But at that time there were no books like our books. The time of Moses was 1550 years before Christ our Saviour came into the world. Our mode of printing or of making paper had not then been discovered. The old Egyptians made linen, in which they wrapped their mummies, and so prepared it, that they could trace hieroglyphics upon it. They also wrote upon rolls made of their rush-papyrus, that is, of the coats which surround its

stalk. The largest papyrus roll now known is ten yards long: many of these are found in the tombs of Egypt, though not often of so great a length. A very valuable one has been taken from these tombs to the museum at Turin, containing the names of King Mykerinus, the builder of the third pyramid, and Reksharé, the architect of Thebes; but the Pentateuch of Moses is not supposed to have been written on this rush-paper.

It is thought that he must have used goat-skins, prepared and fastened together: the very oldest manuscripts of his five books known, are written on leather. There is one in the public library, at Cambridge, which was discovered by Dr. Buchanan, in the record-chest of a synagogue of the Black Jews, in Malabar, in 1806: it measures sixteen yards in length; and, though not perfect, consists of thirty-seven skins, dyed red. There is another in the library of the British Museum, which we have seen. That is a large double roll of this description. It is written with great care, on forty thick brown skins, in 153 narrow columns: the writing is, of course, in Hebrew. It was, most probably in this form that the world received the first part of the Word of God, —His *written voice* from heaven.



We cannot suppose that the *very* roll that Moses wrote is come down to us—that would be impossible. That very roll is supposed to have perished at the destruction of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar, B.C. 586; if so, it was treasured and in existence for

eight centuries and a half—more than 800 years. Moses commanded the Levites to put it in the side of the ark of the covenant, "for a witness against the people."

The final covenant made with Israel in the plains of Moab, with the last lofty song and eloquent prophecy, seems to have been written on a separate skin; and Dr. Adam Clarke thinks there is every reason to believe that this was the portion lost and found in the reign of Josiah, 800 years after it was written. This was called an *autograph copy*, which means *the very one that Moses wrote.* It had been lost in the reigns of the wicked kings that went before Josiah, who was a reforming king; and when he set himself to repair the House of the Lord his God, and brought hewn-stone and timber to repair the floors which the kings of Judah had destroyed, Hilkiah, the priest, found a book of the Law of the Lord *by the hand of Moses*, and gave it to the king (2 Chron. xxxiv. 14). You perceive that the frontispiece of this tract exhibits a very beautiful roll, and that underneath it is inscribed—"The Samaritan Pentateuch."

If you look back to the frontispiece of Tract III. you will find the city of Nablus, the "Schechem of the Bible, where the very few people in the world still called Samaritans (about 150 in number), continue to live. This roll is in the possession of their priests, and is thought to be the oldest written copy of the Pentateuch now in existence.

Our Prince of Wales went to see it in the year 1862, and a fine photograph of it was made for his Royal Highness. By his gracious permission, and the kindness of Mr. Bedford, the photographer, we are permitted to present to our readers a woodcut of it in its silver case, and with its cover of crimson satin embroidered with letters of gold.

THE WRITTEN SAMARITAN ALPHABET.

e i t ch z v h d g b a

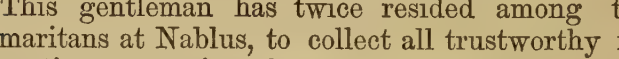
th t sh r k ts p o s n m e

These are the ancient letters in which it is written. We received the antique alphabet from the Rev. J. Mills, who obtained it at Nablus, and has kindly allowed us the use of it. It differs from that found on coins.

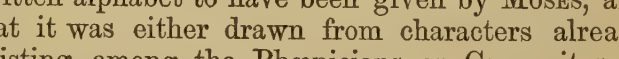
The Samaritans say that their Roll is the identical one written by Abishua, the great-grandson of Aaron, fourth high priest; and others, who do not quite credit this, yet suppose it to have been written hundreds of years before the coming of our Lord. The precious relic is worn and torn with the kisses of many pilgrims, and is patched with rewritten parchment. Mr. Mills considers that about two-thirds of the original writing remains.

This gentleman has twice resided among the Samaritans at Nablus, to collect all trustworthy information concerning them. He believes their old written alphabet to have been given by Moses, and that it was either drawn from characters already existing among the Phœnicians or Canaanites, or else especially given him of God.

THE PHŒNICIAN ALPHABET.



k y t ch z v h d g b a



t sh r k tz p e s n m l

This alphabet of the Canaanites is very old. Some of its letters are remarked by Sir Henry Rawlinson

on the sides of clay tablets full of Assyrian characters (like that on p. 28), and also on copper weights in the shape of lions, which were found in the Nineveh palaces. Sir Henry says that in these Phœnician characters he reads the names of Tiglath Pileser, Shalmaneser, Sargon, and Sennacherib, which are the Scripture names of Assyrian kings, in whose reigns those weights were current. But having mentioned the characters in which it was written, we must tell you a little more about the Roll of the Samaritan Pentateuch.

The translation of the books of Moses in our English Bibles is not taken from that Roll alone, though it is so very old, but from manuscripts which have been copied and re-copied and preserved by the Jews in the square Hebrew character, such as Ezra used after the captivity in Babylon. In their fearful persecutions and wanderings the Jews have lost the original Rolls of Hebrew, and yet from the internal evidence of Scripture the authority of the Hebrew version of the Bible has been generally considered the greatest.

Our translators have taken the utmost pains to compare with each other the three most ancient versions of Scripture—the Samaritan, the Hebrew, and the "Septuagint," which was a Greek version, made at Alexandria, B.C. 277, by a council of seventy learned men, for the use of the Jews in Egypt, who were accustomed to speak Greek.

Alexandria was then a chief colony of the Jews, and one of the greatest cities in the world; it is said that a hundred thousand of them resided there.

Learned men consider this translation, called the Septuagint, very valuable. The evangelists and the apostles quoted from it as much as from the Hebrew, but they never quoted from the Apocryphal books

which were attached to this Greek version, and which may still be found in some few old English Bibles, bound up between the Old and New Testaments. They were *not*, as we have said, *inspired books*. Some were written by learned Jews at Alexandria, after the prophetic spirit had ceased with Malachi. Not even their writers say they are inspired: they were written in Greek and not in Hebrew, the ancient sacred language. They were never received as sacred by the ancient Jewish Church. A child may perceive the difference between them and the Holy Scriptures.

The three versions are, in most of their main points, alike, and the Samaritan copy as well as the Hebrew, may have followed the very autograph of Moses. It has been remarked by students of the two, that "if the Samaritan shall be found in some places to correct the Hebrew, yet will the Hebrew copy in other places correct the Samaritan. Each copy is invaluable. Both have been often transcribed, both therefore may contain errors; they differ in many instances, therefore the errors must be many. Let the genuine words of Moses be ascertained by their joint assistance."

In the opposite vignette you have embodied the subject of this Tract. Here are the tables of the Ten Commandments on stone, first graven by the finger of God; and the papyrus rush behind them, hints at the material for writing upon which was used at that time in Egypt. You have also the miniature of the SAMARITAN roll, with a HEBREW roll to the left, and the GREEK Septuagint to the right; while on the rock behind them, are hints of the rough inscriptions and drawings on the Sinaitic mountains. The heavenly dove hovers over the holy books, distinguished from all others in their

TABLES OF STONE—WITH HEBREW AND SAMARITAN ROLLS OF THE PENTATEUCH—THE GREEK SEPTUAGINT—AND ALEXANDRINE VERSION OF THE NEW TESTAMENT.

celestial origin. They are the first written forms of the message from God to man—the Revelation which lifts the veil from the unseen world on high.

The most important point of variation, as is well known, between these three versions, is in the Chronology, or time-table, in which some of the copyists seem to have used their own discretion, for copyists were not inspired.

	From Adam to the Deluge.	Between the Deluge and the birth of Christ.		From the Creation of man to the present Era.
The Hebrew gives	1656	2348	+ 1868 =	5872
The Samaritan gives	1307	3131	+ 1868 =	6306
The Septuagint gives	2262	3099	+ 1868 =	7229

You will observe that in these Tracts we always adhere to the first, or Hebrew view, that the seventh thousand year of the world's history is yet

to come—its Sabbath in the *week of time.* The Hebrew is called the "Old fashioned" Chronology; and it is still always appended to our authorized English Bible.

The very name Samaritan was with the Jew a term of extreme reproach; they said to our Lord Himself, "Thou art a Samaritan, and hast a devil" (John viii. 48.) *But the Samaritans expected the Messiah* (John iv. 25), and when He came many of them believed on Him.

The Jews "had no dealings with the Samaritans," but the Saviour had. He abode among this people for two days, after conversing with the woman of Samaria as He sat on the well at this same Sychar, and "many believed because of His own word." Did He point them to this copy of their venerated law, and determine that it should endure among them till the hour of His coming again, as a witness to Him? And where? In the place of its earliest utterance in the Land of Promise.

We are thrice told in the Acts of the Apostles that there were churches of God in Samaria (Acts viii. 1, ix. 31; xv. 3.) The apostle Philip was a preacher of the Gospel there, "working miracles," and the people with one accord gave heed to him and were baptized, both men and women (Acts viii. 6.) *By Peter and John they received afterwards the gift of the Holy Ghost* (ver 17). These Apostles preached the Gospel in many villages of the Samaritans, following the example of their Master, who "must needs go through Samaria," and forgot not His ancient Israel.

KIBROTH HATTAAVAH—THE GRAVES IN THE WILDERNESS.

THE TIMES WHEN THE PENTATEUCH WAS BEING WRITTEN.

THE GRAVES IN THE WILDERNESS.

No. IX.

The Books of Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy, all concern the LAW and the pilgrimage of Israel in the desert, and it is an interesting question to ask, How much may it be supposed that the people at that time knew of the Divine Revelation?

Amid his other duties ordained by God, Aaron had, doubtless, not neglected that of copying the Law, and reading it to the people. This was especially ordered to be done for eight days together, once in every seven years; but we know that during the training of Israel in the wilderness, this was not all they heard or knew of the Law; for Moses says to them (Deut. xxx. 11—14),—

"The commandment which is written in this book of the law is not hidden from thee, neither is it far off.

"It is not in heaven, that thou shouldest say, Who shall go up for us to heaven, and bring it unto us, that we may hear it, and do it?

"Neither is it beyond the sea, that thou shouldest say, Who shall go over the sea for us, and bring it unto us, that we may hear it, and do it?

"But the word is very nigh unto thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart, that thou mayest do it."

"In thy mouth" seems to signify, that they learned portions of it. Moses ordered the Levites

to write his last noble song, and to teach it to the children of Israel,—"*Put it in their mouths*, that this song may be a witness for me against the children of Israel, that when many evils and troubles are befallen them, this song shall testify against them as a witness; for it shall not be forgotten out of the mouths of their seed" (Deut. xxxi. 19, 21). If an Israelite was in doubt as to any ordinance or duty, he was to inquire of the priest, the Levite, who was also the judge, and would show him the sentence of judgment (Deut. xvii. 9), as written by Moses. Any one of the people who was able, might write a copy of the Law for himself; but the Levites were in general the learned class among this pastoral people, and were not only to make, but to give away, correct copies of it; and probably they went about from tent to tent (as Scripture-readers and Bible-women do now from house to house), to read the Law to each family. It is always assumed that the people "knew it"; and in the Book of Deuteronomy, Moses threw its precepts into a new form, for the generation which had been born since the entrance into the wilderness.

But we have not yet completed our survey of Exodus, all whose forty chapters, *except the first twelve*, and the ten first chapters of the Book of Numbers in addition, concern *Israel's first year in the wilderness*. The book of Leviticus, as its name implies, is altogether a book of *Laws*. The *second ten chapters* of Numbers tell the whole story of the pilgrimage for the next thirty-eight years, till Aaron dies, and is buried on Mount Hor; and then Moses carries on the people for one more year to the conquest of Eastern Palestine before he too ascends the Mount Pisgah to die: and the main idea of this tract

must be to lead you to think of the period of the thirty-eight years, and to trace the *graves in the wilderness*, for all the generation who came out of Egypt died there, except Caleb and Joshua, (Numbers xxvi. 63—65), though a new generation of twenty years old and upwards had risen up to be numbered by Moses and Eleazar, from all the families of the patriarchs, in their stead.

The history of the wilderness is both actual and symbolical; and it is in many respects a foreshowing of the history of the whole of God's large family, who, with rare and final exceptions, are to pay the penalty of sin by death, ere they can reach the heavenly Canaan. But ere we look upon the sins of Israel and their punishment, let us first examine what Jehovah the Lord God of heaven and earth was willing to have been to the nation whom He calls His first-born. He had said to Pharaoh—

"Let my first-born go, that he may serve me."

The Ten Commandments were the revealed standard of morals required in the Mosaic dispensation to which the Sermon on the Mount is the parallel from the lips of our Lord when in the flesh.

The Divine PRESENCE had been manifest on the Mount Sinai in thunder and in fire, in a way to efface all the faint and false heathen memories of that Presence which had once been manifested at the gate of Eden. That real and visible Presence was to dwell with this favored people in a pillar of fire and cloud, and to dwell perpetually, during their sojourn in the wilderness.

The children of Israel were introduced to this Presence immediately after their first passover, and for forty years they were perfectly familiar with it. "He spread a cloud for a covering" (Ps. cv. 39)

over that vast host of pilgrims, "and fire to give light in the night;"—a cloud that could be "darkness" to the whole camp of the Egyptians, while to Israel it "gave light." And the Lord came down in the pillar of the cloud, and stood in the door of the tabernacle (Num. xii. 5). The cloudy pillar descended,—and the Lord talked with Moses at the door of the tabernacle (Exod. xxxiii. 9).

The Lord "took not away the pillar of the cloud by day, nor the pillar of fire by night, from before the people."—Exodus xiii. 22.

But "when the cloud covered the tent of the congregation, and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle," then,—

"Moses was not able to enter into the tent of the congregation, because the cloud abode thereon, and the glory of the Lord filled the Tabernacle."—(Exodus xl. 35.)

The pattern of this Tabernacle in its minutest detail had been shewn to Moses in the Mount (Exod. xxvi. 30). The Lord had prepared for Himself in the wilderness, a place of Presence "between the cherubim over the mercy-seat."

The Divine autograph, the second set of the tables of the Law (Deut. x. 5), were the treasure preserved in the ark, whose lid of pure gold was beaten out at either end into the form of the cherubim; but what that form was we have no hint, except that it was "winged." The Mercy-seat was the blood-besprinkled lid that covered the law tables, foreshadowing Him who was "the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth.' The cherubim symbolized human nature in perfect oneness with Jesus, for they were elevated on the platform of the sprinkled mercy-seat, one with Jesus in His death, and therefore one with Him in His glory.

And it is from above the Mercy-seat, and between

the two cherubim, that the Lord declares to Moses—

"There I will meet with thee, and I will commune with thee."—(Exodus xxv. 22.)

The Almighty is said, figuratively, to *dwell* between the cherubim, to *ride* upon them, to *sit* between them. Ezekiel, in vision long after (chaps. x., xi.), saw His glory depart from off the threshold of the temple in Jerusalem, and stand over the cherubim, and the cherubim lifted up their wings and mounted up from the earth in the prophet's sight, at the close of Israel's "trial era," to return no more visibly to that nation till the holy Babe of Nazareth lay in the arms of the aged Simeon in the temple of Herod, and the man of God knew *Him* to be the "Light" that would lighten the Gentiles, and "the glory" of His people Israel.

When He, the beloved Son of God, gave up the ghost upon the accursed tree, the vail of the temple with its "cunning work" of cherubim, was rent in twain. The visible Presence had no more symbol upon earth, and henceforward abode only in the hearts of His spiritual Israel—the Light to lighten the Gentiles. His people Israel, according to the flesh, have since "abode many days without a king, and without a prince, and without a sacrifice, and without an image (margin, 'a standing' before the Lord), and without an ephod, and without teraphim" (Hosea iii. 4); without all the *signs* of the Presence to which they had been accustomed; their King and their Sacrifice they had blindly rejected, and the symbols that had surrounded and prefigured Him have ever since vanished away.

Josephus declares that no man knew the form of the cherubim in his day, "their form is not like to that of any of the creatures which men have seen,

though Moses said he had seen such beings near the throne of God" (Antiq. iii. 6); but if the later Jews had lost the knowledge of the form of these mystic symbols, the allusions to them remain in God's Word, and they must always be invested with an awful interest and importance in the eye of the student of the Bible.

At the commencement of their wilderness journey, God manifested His design to claim the people for His own: and all His laws for them are framed as by their king. He meant to be the Visible and Eternal Head of this nation whom He had ransomed from Egypt, and would now ransom from Satan, and from their own sinful selves.

The heathen nations had learned evil from the Prince of Evil, whom they served and consulted, in certain ways which were an "abomination to the Lord," these practices He forbade Israel to follow.

"There shall not be found among you any one that useth divination, or an observer of times, or an enchanter, or a witch. Or a charmer, or a consulter with familiar spirits, or a wizard, or a necromancer. The Lord thy God hath not suffered thee so to do." (Deut. xviii. 10—14.)

We find in Leviticus xx. 27, that transgressors in this respect were to be stoned to death.

The life of this people was to be ruled by communion with a Holy Spirit from above, and not from beneath.

They were to be redeemed from Satan's power, and a law was ordained for them which stood between their better and their worse selves, as it did between Israel and heathendom; it was a gift of guidance to strengthen motions towards good in the weak, and to check the evil of the heart.

In the patriarchal childhood of the nation they had been governed as a family by *fatherhood*, and

by few and simple rules; but now in their headstrong youth they needed "commandments" that should vigorously check impulsive action. "The law was added because of transgressions," and during the first fifty days in which God led them away alone to the wilderness, they had several lessons in putting away childish things, and entering upon nobleness of life, in communion with the unseen and invisible God.

They had hitherto received only fragments of God's revelations and laws, and by those they had abode all the while they remained in Egypt, where the people had a religion of far more show. Now *a system of laws* was given to Israel by degrees, and of laws divided under different heads—ceremonial, moral, civil, and political. Side by side with the law of the father, came the law of the priest, presiding over sacerdotal affairs. This law was gradually revealed. In Exodus we have only its marked outline. Details afterwards grew up out of the requirements of the time and special circumstances. The unconnected nature of the laws in the earlier books of Moses makes this evident. Anything like a perfect system of law is only found in Deuteronomy, when the younger generation were prepared to receive it; and yet this system was not *final*, it required much after illustration by teachers and by prophets, whose office it was to explain the law.

God desired to *shew* Himself to this favored nation as their Head. He was going to place them in Canaan, and to teach them, ere they entered it, that all the land was HIS, the first fruits of it were to be offered to HIM (Exod. xxiii. 19) all the fruits it brought forth in each seventh year were to belong to *His* poor. It was to "rest and be still," for their sake. All the people were HIS, all their firstborn

belonged to HIM, and were to be ransomed by their own parents.

The power of God was absolutely unlimited, and supreme over governors and governed—none could be cruel and despotic under HIM; Jehovah was the KING, above the prophet and above the priest, whom He raised up to study and explain His laws, for LAW regulated the whole life of an Israelite, as the Gospel now ought to regulate the whole life of a Christian, his house and home, his dress, his food, his property. By these laws the duties of worship were in all things defined, and selfishness in every way openly checked, and the necessity of an atonement for *every sin* on the part of the sinner was perpetually kept before the eyes of Israel.

The *Moral* Law, or law of conduct towards God and man, was followed by the *judicial* law, or law of judgments, and the *ceremonial* law, or law of festivals and sacrifices,—which latter required to be so many and continual, that the Apostle Peter says of them in Acts xv. 10, "they were a yoke which the fathers were not able to bear."

This, however, only pointed to THE COMING ONE, who, and who only, would in course of time be able to fulfil the Law; who, and who only, would also bear the curse consequent on its nonfulfilment for all mankind who should believe on Him; and doubtless many a thoughtful Israelite beheld HIM under the shadow of the "Paschal Lamb," of the "Manna," of the "Smitten rock," of the "Mercy-seat," of the "High Priest," of the "Rod that budded," of the "Brazen Serpent," of the "Scape-goat," and of all the various offerings.

It was the intent of God *to set apart to Himself* the "peculiar people" to whom these Divine revelations were made.

And alas! having shewn what it was the purpose of Jehovah that Israel *should* be, we must hasten to observe what they really were, the "manners of the people that died in the wilderness," are all summed up in one word—"in the days of the *provocation*," or provoking of God by His sinful creatures (Psalm xcv. 8).

You must look for the history of the thirty-eight years, as we have said, from the 10th to the 20th chapters of the Book of Numbers, and for the repetition of it in the first and second chapters of Deuteronomy: also for the summary of the names of the places at which the cloudy pillar which went before them rested, in the 33rd chapter of Numbers. Those writers have done great service, who have diligently explored and marked any points of interest in these thirty-eight years of which so little is recorded.

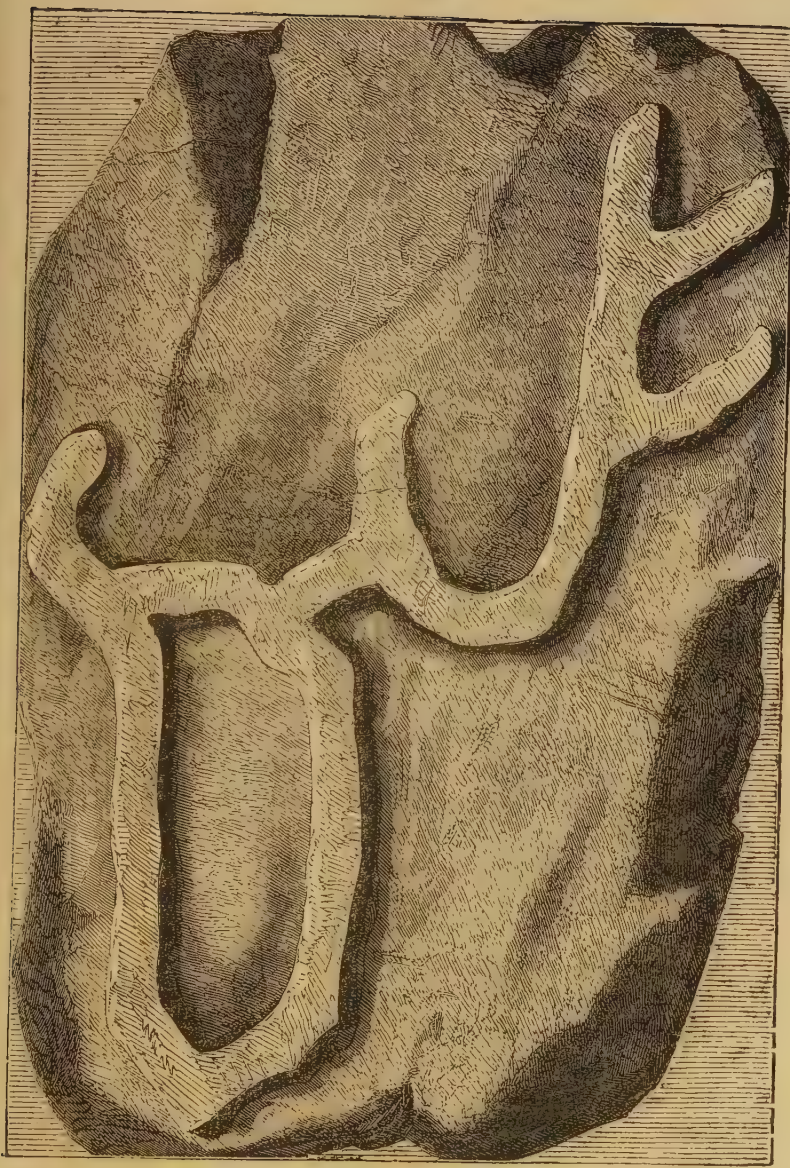
"On the twentieth day of the second month, of the second year (after they came out of Egypt) the cloud was taken up from off the tabernacle of the testimony."—(Numbers x. 11.)

"And it rested next in the wilderness of Paran," or Feiran, (ver. 12,) and they departed from the mount of the Lord three days' journey, (ver. 33); and the next we hear of them is that they complained, and that it displeased the Lord, and the fire of the Lord burnt among them. Thus they had His "fire" in exchange for His "shadow," and it consumed in the uttermost parts of the camp till quenched at the prayer of Moses; and he called the name of the place Taberah.

The Hebrew root בער literally signifies burning, but figuratively anger or wrath. The sense of the Arabic word *berah*, is the wrath of God. The Arabic name of the Wady Berah is therefore the record of this fact—the valley of the wrath of God. In this very valley Dr. Stewart of Leghorn, (before

quoted) found a number of blackened cairns of stone which had evidently remained undisturbed for ages. In two of them a huge stone had fallen in from the top, revealing two narrow chambers formed of granite blocks. "Travelling up the Wady Berah," he says, "we found more tombs with several chambers in each; the whole of one part of the wide valley seems to have been covered with graves, of which the stones are scattered about in all directions. There is no vestige of a town or village. The place is too distant from Feiran, for the graves to have had any connection with the ancient city there." This writer therefore believes that they are the graves of the Israelites, the graves of the murmurers at Taberah.

Dr. Stewart says nothing about the Sinaitic inscriptions in this valley, but Dr. Robinson supplies this missing link of evidence. When he passed through Wady Berah, the burial-grounds escaped his notice, but he observed and noticed the ancient writings: "I crossed this valley," says he, "and on a large rock found four inscriptions. Just by our tent was a huge detached rock covered with them; indeed, we found these writings at almost every point where the overhanging or projecting rock seemed to indicate a convenient resting-place." The occurrence of the Sinaitic inscriptions in connection with the graves in Wady Berah is a new point in the evidence, since, if it be admitted that the tombs are those of the Israelites, the Israelite authorship of the adjoining inscriptions would be rendered still more probable; and it is very remarkable that these inscriptions,—whether as read by Professor Beer's alphabet, or by Mr. Forster's, (see p. 137) would, in either case, serve *as epitaphs*. The ordinary and actual size of these mysterious letters is figured on the opposite page, as given by Laborde.



Two Sinaitic Characters, signifying, according to Mr. Forster's alphabet, "THE PEOPLE"—according to Professor Beer's, "PEACE." They stand at the commencement of a large number of the inscriptions.

If their origin be all "Nabathean," and their general date the middle of the fourth century *after* our Lord—how was it that in the age of Cosmas, *so shortly after that* in A.D. 518, all knowledge and tradition of the meaning of the characters was *lost* among the Arabs of the district, but that certain Jews professed to understand and interpret their meaning, and assigned them to the age of Moses and the Exode, and to their own ancestors, the ancient Israelites, during their wanderings in the Desert of Sin?

On either side of this Arabian desert, EGYPT, and ASSYRIA, abound in written monuments of as high and far higher antiquity. The hoar old age of the stones of Ipsambul, of Philœ, and of Thebes in Egypt, is credited even by atheists, and in some recently recovered monuments of Chaldea, the claim is advanced of an antiquity ascending nearly to the Confusion of tongues. Why then are these Sinaitic inscriptions or contemporary evidences of the authenticity of the Books of Moses to be dismissed when their claim to be such was declared twelve hundred years ago? Their numbers computed by thousands, their extent by miles, and their positions often fathoms, not feet, above the valley floors, they *cannot* have been the pastime of chance pilgrims or travellers; and, we repeat once more, why are the great mass of them *only* found in the very route of the Israelitish wanderings, as recorded by Moses? For it is indeed true that descending from Serbal, we trace these writings in continuous succession from its foot to the summit of Sarbut-el-Khadem, a line of march of about three-and-thirty miles, corresponding exactly with the "three days' journey" between Sinai and Kibroth-hattaavah of Num. x. 33; and from these points there is both an upper

and a lower route. Mr. Forster thinks that *both* were traversed by the Israelites after the camp broke up from Sinai, the former apparently by Moses and the host. The latter probably by the "mixed multitude" and other followers of the camp. They would meet in the plain of Ramleh, the only one in the neighbourhood of sufficient extent to have contained the people with their tents and baggage, and "very much cattle."

"The summit," we have said, "of Sarbut-el-Khadem," for our frontispiece will shew you—that it is a mountain height, and a mountain cemetery—a place of graves; and graves are also scattered in the surrounding valleys. This mountain and its monuments were known to geographers two or three hundred years ago, as an Israelite station. Niebuhr rediscovered it in 1762. Laval, a French artist who has modelled the inscriptions, speaks of the ascent as very toilsome up the precipitous red sandstone rock. "A narrow track winds along the face of the precipice at the head of the ravine, where a false step would have been death; and at the top we came upon a level ridge, and a tract of high table-land resembling the Saxon Switzerland, and intersected by deep ravines, while higher peaks lay all around it. Here with a dark chasm on either side are situated the singular and mysterious monuments of Sarbut-el-Khadem."

This mountain had been spoken of to M. Niebuhr as Jebel-el-Mokatteb. On ascending it, he says, he was astonished to find on the summit a superb *Egyptian* cemetery. "I give this description of it," he adds, "*though I had seen nothing in Egypt like it;* the space is filled with stones from five to seven feet high, covered with hieroglyphs; and the more one examines these stones, the more one is convinced

that they are tombstones, inscribed with epitaphs. In the midst of the stones has been erected a building of which only the walls remain, and a little chamber at the end sustained by square pillars, and these are also covered with inscriptions."

In a second visit, Niebuhr succeeded in copying these so-called "hieroglyphical" inscriptions which, he remarks, are as fine as any of the remains in Egypt. One feature particularly attaching to them however is, that the *goat*, an animal native to the desert, abounds in these, while in Egypt we notice *always the bull, and never the goat.*

Mr. Forster has copied and offered readings of Niebuhr's plates of the tablets of Sarbut-el-Khadem, and on first seeing them any cursory observer would say, "Oh, these are Egyptian hieroglyphics;" but on a more patient examination, this interpreter points us to unmistakable figures of long-legged geese, or "*nuhams*," as the prominent symbols; *twenty-five* of these birds occur in the first tablet, *ten* in the second, and *fifteen* in the third. The way of their capture is likewise indicated by a succession of archers, the same as on Egyptian monuments; there are no fewer than eighteen on the first tombstone. The Israelites of the Exode were a nation of archers.

"The children of Ephraim being armed and carrying bows." (Ps. lxxviii. 9.)

The birds which darkened the air would fall by tens of thousands before the arrows of 600,000 armed men; and besides the archers there occur figures running with sticks, which may depict the pursuit of the "featured fowls." Owls are also prominent, "ill-omened, and emblems of death." Among all these figures are commingled Sinaitic

characters. Mr. Forster thus deciphers by his alphabet some of the mixed legends and devices.

"From the sea the cranes congregate to one spot;
The archers shoot at the cranes passing over the plain.
Evil-stomached they rush after the prey—
The sepulchre their doom—their marrow corrupted by God.
The sleepy owl, emblem of death, God's sends destruction among them.

* * * * * *

"The mother of sepulchres—the black and white geese,
A sudden death. Greedily lusting after flesh, die the gluttons.
The mountain top ascend the Hebrews,
They eat, devour, consume, till nothing is left, exceeding all bounds.
Their bodies corrupted, by gluttony they die."

Now let us look back to the 11th chapter of Numbers.

Drunkenness and gluttony were vices against which the Israelites of the Exode had been warned by Moses; see the law made against these sins (Deut. xxi. 18—21), and that no less a punishment than death was decreed be inflicted on their account.*

"And while the flesh was yet between their teeth, ere it was chewed, the wrath of the Lord was kindled against the people, and the Lord smote the people with a very great plague. And He called the name of that place Kibroth-hattaavah, because there they buried the people that lusted."—(Num. xi. 33, 34.)

And for what had they lusted? they despised the manna, and desired flesh to eat, therefore the Lord in His anger brought "quails" from the sea, and let them fall by the camp, as it were, two cubits high upon the face of the earth; with which description has been connected the extraordinary

* It would be interesting to search through the Books of Moses against *how many sins* the punishment of death was decreed by God.

idea of *small birds lying two cubits* high upon the face of the earth. Both Mr. Forster and Dean Stanley have done something to prove that the reading of the Hebrew word used by Moses, "*Salu*," ought not to be "*quails*," but "*cranes*," a kind of long-legged, red goose, two cubits in stature.

At the commencement of four short Sinaitic inscriptions in the Wady Mokatteb, or Written Valley, Mr. Forster found the old Arabic word *nuham*, which in his dictionary was translated "red geese," and as *the sea* was signified by the next word, the reading of the whole was, he believed—

> "The red geese ascend from the sea
> Lusting, the people eat on at them,"

Or,

> "Lusting the people feed to repletion."

He then began to think that probably the Hebrew word *salu* might not mean *quails*, but *cranes*. Such birds sometimes resort to the coasts of Picardy, in France, in prodigious flocks. In 1740 they destroyed all the corn near the sea coast. They were knocked on the head with clubs, but their numbers were so vast that this availed but little; *when the north wind, which had brought them, ceased to blow, they took their leave.*

Mr. Forster announced this discovery concerning the cranes from the sea in his "Voice of Sinai," *twelve years ago*, and he was much surprised and pleased to read the following fact in an *unpublished* journal of Dean Stanley's :—

"On the evening and morning of our encampment, immediately before reaching the Wady Huderah, the sky was literally darkened by the flight of innumerable birds, which proved to be some large red-legged cranes *three feet high*, with

black and white wings, measuring seven feet from tip to tip, which we had seen in like numbers at the first cataract of the Nile." He adds that Schubert saw similar flights on nearly the same spot, which must be close to Kibroth-hattaavah, and that he and his friends had eaten one of these birds upon the Nile, and had found it *very good food.* When seen at Huderah, they were on the wing from the gulf of Akaba, across the Sinai peninsula; were flying over the very scene of the Scripture miracle. These *large* birds, then, it seems, were spread abroad round about the camp to dry their flesh in the burning sands, for this was a common Egyptian custom.

It is very obvious that the costly and elaborate monuments of the cemetery of Sarbut-el-Khadem, could not have been executed in the first month of Israel's stay there. A part of the thirty-eight years must have been spent in a *return* to that vicinity, and the tombstones of that mountain-top are no work of shepherds. How they can ever have been attributed to Egyptian miners, of whom nothing is heard elsewhere, one is at a loss to conceive. It seems that no visitors have hitherto succeeded in finding the mines; yet to the east and west of the small temple dedicated to Athor, on the summit, may be seen great mounds of slag; and there is a tongue of land that forms a terrace, and projects out into the valley, coated over with slag four or five feet thick, and covered to its base with slag also. This open spot appears to have been chosen for the smelting of ore, on account of the keen draughts of wind perpetually blowing here.

But if mining were ever carried on here *by Egyptians*, by way of Tor and the Red Sea; *still the*

working in metals ordained at Sinai for the tabernacle service (and skill in which was especially imparted by God to Bezaleel and Aholiab), must have taken place somewhere, and probably at Sarbut-el-Khadem. The brazen altar which Bezaleel had made was in existence at the time of Solomon, who offered a thousand burnt offerings upon it when it was more than five hundred years old. The brazen serpent that Moses had made was only broken up three hundred years after Solomon's time by Hezekiah, because the people of Israel worshipped it. The making of the serpent seems indeed to have been suddenly commanded when they were in the vicinity of Edom, after the death of Miriam; but all the metal furniture of the tabernacle *must have had a foundry*, and that must have existed not far from Sinai.

The Desert of the wanderings is no trackless waste, it is only a narrow peninsula scarcely a hundred miles across, and the shepherds and their flocks, and the followers of the camp *must* always have been scattered abroad *in every direction* through its narrow wadys, and over its habitable table lands. The shepherds could not forget, it is certain, the palm shades of Wady Feiran or Wady Hebron, and may have perpetually revisited them. The artisans may have revisited Kibroth-hattaavah, and many of them may have been employed in executing the Rock records and tablets, which were likely to attract every eye, and to prove a chief point of interest and occupation in the wilderness life.

It is also a point not to be overlooked, that multitudes of native Egyptians went forth with Israel out of Egypt (see Exod. xii. 38; Num. xi. 4). In Lev. xxiv. 10 we read of an Israelitish woman whose father was an Egyptian, and this proves occasional intermarriage. The inscriptions of a people

so long resident in Egypt, would naturally be accompanied by some Egyptian hieroglyphics.

The bodies of both Jacob and Joseph had been embalmed by Egyptian physicians (Gen. l. 2, 3, 26), and buried in state, which certainly involves the use of hieroglyphics on their coffins. The bones of Joseph accompanied the nation in their Exode, and these Egyptian characters must thus have been perpetually before their eyes.

Hieroglyphic writing, therefore, could not have been forbidden to them, though, as they became separated from those who had used it they would gradually less and less employ it; and use it, only as we still use the Roman or Saxon names of the days and weeks, without reference to their heathen origin. In the hieroglyphic tablets at Sarbut-el-Khadem, however, and on the rocks, animals peculiar to Arabia are constantly substituted for brute Egyptian deities. No Egyptian would have substituted the long-horned Ibis for Apis his god. The human figures are sometimes representations of the Pharaohs, sometimes of the false gods of Egypt. Many of the Israelites were no doubt idolaters in Egypt, indeed there is Scripture proof of it. It is four times mentioned, Ezek. xx. 12:

"Thy sabbaths they greatly polluted, for their eyes were after their fathers' idols."

This accounts for the temple of Athor on the height of Sarbut-el-Khadem, and it was at this point that the "mixed multitude" probably began to be sifted out of the host. The latest monument found in this cemetery is said by Lepsius, to be that of the last king of the Nineteenth dynasty, and since that era *he* supposes the place "to have been deserted by the Egyptians."

But what if *the Israelites* thus dated their

Kibroth-hattaavah, in the second year of their wanderings! That last king of the Nineteenth dynasty was the one not buried in his own tomb, and would here, by another incidental proof, be identified as the Pharaoh of the Exodus.

It seems to have been by degrees that God refined and purified their language, as well as their ideas.

Besides the tables of the Law, two memorials were ordered to be kept of the miracles of the Exode, and laid up in the ark—Aaron's rod that budded, and an omer of the manna—the bread of the wilderness. St. Paul refers to them in the Hebrews.

"The ark of the covenant overlaid round about with gold, wherein was the golden pot that had manna, and Aaron's rod that budded, and the tables of the covenant." (Heb. ix. 3, 4.)

Between the laying up of the memorials of the *manna* and the *rod* may have occurred an interval of twenty years, the manna being laid up in B.C. 1491, the rod probably about B.C. 1471; but if any would, from the distinction of the priestly rod being laid up in the ark, deduce example for the undue assumption of authority on the part of the ecclesiastical orders—one deadly error of these present days—the great apostle of the Gentiles specifies that it was "the time *past* in which these things were ordained," and points to the functions of the Levitical priesthood only as illustrative of the eternal priesthood of Christ, his beloved Master, who entered in once for all into heaven itself, and having offered *Himself* unto God, thereby put away the sin alike of Jew and Gentile, and then sat down "a priest after the order of Melchisedek" at "the right hand of God, from henceforth expecting till His enemies be made His footstool." (See also Heb. vii. 18, 19.)

A STONE-DOOR FROM THE GIANT CITIES OF BASHAN.

THE TIMES OF THE BOOK OF DEUTERONOMY.

THE CLOSING YEAR IN THE WILDERNESS.

No. X.

THERE is a place called KADESH, where the greatest rebellion took place against the authority of Moses and Aaron, soon after the doom of forty years of wandering had been pronounced. After the fatal stay of the people for a month at Kibroth-hattaavah, their way lay onward "through a great and terrible wilderness by the mountain of the Amorites to Kadesh-barnea." (Deut. i. 19.)

"There are eleven days' journey from Horeb by the way of mount Seir unto Kadesh-barnea," (Deut. i. 2),

is the minute record of Moses; and he makes another,—

"And the space in which we came from Kadesh-barnea until we came even over the brook Zered (north of Kadesh) was thirty-and eight-years, until all the generations of the men of war were wasted out from among the host, as the Lord sware unto them."

You may look for Kadesh on the map, p. 125, which is concluded to be in the neighbourhood of Ain-el-Weibeh. The line on that map marks the route of the Israelites till they arrived at Kadesh the first time, at the beginning of the above thirty-eight years.

Kadesh was then a city, and its name meant Holy; it had been holy like Horeb from more ancient times; its old name was Enmishpat—spring of judgment. Chedorlaomer had ravaged there in Abraham's day (see Gen. xiv. 7,) and it is twice mentioned in connection with Abraham's sojourn

in this country southward of Palestine. (Gen. xvi. 14; xx. 1.) Its natural springs had probably made it famous of old.

At Ain-el-Weibeh Dr. Robinson mentions three small streams running out from a low rise of ground, two of which have a strong medicinal taste, but the third is pure and good, and flows out of a rock which seems to have crumbled away. It is here *he* places the site of Kadesh, but more recent writers think that it lay still a little north of the plain just described, where the Wady-Jerafah descends from a precipitous plateau to the Wady-Arabah; and just at the junction there is a fountain of living water, now called Ain-esh-Sheibah, at the foot of the lofty cliff El-mukrah, which exactly answers to the description of the rock before which Moses gathered the congregation when he smote it twice, and water came out abundantly; this would be within a short journey of mount Hor, where Aaron was to die, soon afterwards.

It is very much to be remarked how the punishments enforced in the wilderness life, came specially on the breach of some one or other of the Ten Commandments.

The worship of the golden calf was the transgression of the first commandment:

"Thou shalt have no other gods before me."

And its punishment was the death of 3000 of the people.

It was also a breach of the second commandment; they had bowed down before a graven image, and forgotten that the Lord was a jealous God.

The second sin occurred also before the mount, (see Lev. x. 1), when Nadab and Abihu, Aaron's eldest sons, who had been admitted with the seventy elders into the very presence of the God of Israel,

offered "strange fire before the Lord, which He commanded not; and there went out fire from the Lord and consumed them, and Aaron was forbidden to bewail them, for this was a sin against the ordained form of worship;" and from Lev. x. 9, it may be inferred that wine or strong drink had unfitted them for discernment between the holy and unholy, the clean and the unclean.

Thus, therefore, did their heavenly King impress upon Israel His *first* and *second* commandments.

His *third* was enforced also by the penalty of death, (see Lev. xxiv. 10, 16), on the son of an Israelitish woman by an Egyptian father, who blasphemed the NAME of the Lord, and cursed.

"And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Let all that heard him lay their hands upon his head, and let all the congregation stone him."

The fourth commandment, concerning God's DAY, receives equal witness. See Num. xv. 32.

"And while the children of Israel were in the wilderness, they found a man that gathered sticks upon the sabbath day.

"And they put him in ward, because it was not declared what should be done to him.

"And the Lord said unto Moses, The man shall be surely put to death: all the congregation shall stone him with stones without the camp.

And if God thus defended His WORSHIP, His NAME, and His DAY, and the people thus learned their duty towards HIMSELF, the history also illustrates His verification of the commands of the *second* table of laws concerning fellow-men. If the *fifth* commandment is broken—

"The man who smites or curses his father and his mother, shall surely be put to death." (Exod. xxi. 15, 17.)

And he that even "setteth light by them is cursed." (Deut. xxvii. 16.)

For the sixth, see Lev. xxiv. 17:

"And he that killeth any man shall surely be put to death."

For the seventh:

See all the instances of marked judgment upon sins of impurity and greediness, in the "graves of lust" at Kibroth-hattaavah, (Numb. xi. 34), in the fearful plague, when four-and-twenty thousand died at Baal-peor, (Numb. xxv. 9.)

For the eighth:

He that stealeth a man, and selleth him, he shall surely be put to death, (Exod. xxi. 16); theft of a minor description is to be followed by restoring double.

And now for bearing false witness:

See the punishment of Miriam, who was smitten with leprosy, and became white as snow, for bearing false witness against her brother Moses. It is said concerning this, that

"The Lord heard it."

That was a sin that included also the breach of the *tenth* commandment; for both Miriam and Aaron seem to have coveted authority that was not theirs, and claimed an equality with Moses which Jehovah it is said, "suddenly" denied, and the anger of the Lord was kindled till the meek and forgiving brother cried, saying,

"Heal her now, O God, I beseech thee."

Thus God shewed His anger against each of the sins that He had specially forbidden. But the sins of the wilderness were all sins against God's wonderful love and mercy and power, against the "first and great commandment" the Lord had given; they were the sins of murmuring and distrust. And, alas! how like are we to wandering Israel even to this day. How many a young life begins with secret repining at a lot it would not have chosen, as Israel did at the manna—with not forgiving God when He takes away our idols—with longing to re-

turn to the leeks and onions of Egypt—with doubt of His power to give us all that is good for us—with getting tired of His way for us—and attempts to carve out our own—and yet our heavenly Father does not give us up. He leads us about from station to station; He empties us from vessel to vessel; He restoreth our souls; He is better to us than our fears; He teaches us what to pray for, and gives us more than our desire; He humbles, and He comforts; He covers our iniquities, and bears all our sorrows. And even if He makes our grave in the wilderness, our souls arise with a risen Saviour to the heavenly Canaan—the promised land, from which none return like the unfaithful spies, to tell us it cannot be won.

These spies went up in the second year of the wandering to see the land of Palestine, and in consequence of their search discouraged the people. They brought back glorious grapes from it, but they said the men of the land were giants, and that they should not be able to go up against them, for they felt like grasshoppers in their sight.

"And the men that did bring up an evil report upon the land, died by the plague before the Lord." (Num. xiv. 37.)

The Syrian vine is still famous for the size of its clusters. There was one of these vines in the grounds of the Duke of Portland, at Welbeck, near Worksop, from which a cluster of grapes was gathered, weighing nineteen pounds; and intelligent travellers aver, that those who have only seen the vines in France and Italy can have no just idea of the size to which the clusters attain in Syria.

The evil part of their report was not probably in itself incorrect, that they had seen people of great stature; for Moses verifies their statement in speaking of the "Anakim, great and tall," and of

other old gigantic tribes, with a reference to the sons of Anak; and in the prophecy of Amos it is said (Amos ii. 9), "yet destroyed I the Amorite before them, whose height was like the height of the cedars, and who was strong as the oaks." Goliath, whom David slew, was a son of Anak; his stature may be taken at about nine feet: but they forgot that He who had dried up the Red Sea before them, and had overcome the Egyptians with His mighty plagues,—if His pillar of cloud and fire had pointed them towards the high-walled cities of the tall Anakim,—would have given them victory in Palestine also; but, as Moses afterwards says to them (Deut. i. 32), "In this thing ye did not believe the Lord your God."

And now the thirty-eight years having passed away since the spies had given their evil report, and "all the generation of the old men of war being wasted out from among the host as the Lord sware unto them," Moses adds—

"Now rise up, said I, and get you over the brook Zered. And we went over the brook Zered." (Deut. ii. 13.)

In the second chapter of Deuteronomy Moses by no means denies that the race they were about to conquer had in old time been gigantic. Still he adds—

"Rise ye up, take your journey, and pass over the river Arnon: behold, I have given into thine hand Sihon the Amorite, king of Heshbon, and his land: begin to possess it, and contend with him in battle.

"This day will I begin to put the dread of thee and the fear of thee upon the nations that are under the whole heaven, who shall hear report of thee, and shall tremble, and be in anguish because of thee.

If you will now turn back to the map at p. 44, you will find the river Arnon to the east of the Dead Sea, and studying the second chapter of

Deuteronomy will shortly find Heshbon mentioned, and Sihon its king, who would not let Israel pass, and who is smitten with his sons and his people, and all his cities, till none remained; the cattle only and the spoil being reserved for a prey, "from Aroer by the brink of the river of Arnon, and from the city that is by the river, even unto Gilead." Our little map will shew you the position of all those places, and you will see that Moses is advancing upwards in his conquest of Palestine, east of the Jordan.

We told you in our third tract that the land of *Eastern* Palestine has only of late years been re-discovered by recent travellers, having long been hidden from the eyes of the western nations; all access to its rocky hiding places and old stone cities being forbidden by the Druses and the Arabs, the modern children of Moab and of Ishmael.

When our fathers and grandfathers therefore read in the book of Deuteronomy of the last conquests of Moses before his people crossed the Jordan, they had none of the evidence that *we* have, of the minute truth of the noble and stirring narrative.

"I feel so glad," says Mr. Porter (who has written a most beautiful book called "The Giant Cities of Bashan"), "that I have been able to visit, even for a brief period, a country so renowned in earliest history, and sacred as one of the first provinces bestowed by God upon His ancient people. I enjoyed the beauty of the scenery, the grandeur of the ruins, the patriarchal welcome of my hosts; but *above all, the overwhelming testimony afforded at every step to the accuracy of the Mosaic history.*

"I had often read of Bashan, I had observed the statement that a single province of Og's kingdom, Argob, contained *threescore great cities!* and I had examined my map and had found that the whole of

Bashan, in which Argob is situated, is not larger than one of our English counties, and now when I came to the spot itself I found the story was all true! I had a list of more than *one hundred ruined* cities and villages situated in these mountains, in my hand, and more than *thirty* of them I had myself visited or passed closely by."

The Scripture name "Argob" means "the stony." The Druses now call it "El Lejah," and it lies like an island in the midst of the green and fertile plains of Bashan, on which scarcely a stone is to be seen; but an island of basalt, whose edges resemble a rocky sea coast; its general shape is almost oval, it is sixty miles long and twenty miles broad; and it doubles our interest in this strange tract of land to know that it was really the kingdom of Og, the giant of Bashan. And he was no giant in a fairy tale, but a true Scripture giant, and the last of his race named in the 3rd chapter of Deuteronomy, 11th and 13th verses. Moses even mentions his bedstead of iron, nine cubits long and four broad, (a cubit was either fifteen or eighteen inches.)

Let us think a little longer about this giant's kingdom. The rocky island is rent in the most wonderful manner. Great wide fissures extend for miles, which can neither be crossed by man nor beast; the rugged ridges of rocks are ascended by a winding path like a goat-track, and thence Mr. Porter came suddenly on the ruins of Edrei, Og's ancient capital city. Its situation is most remarkable, without a single spring of water, without river or stream, without access except over rocks, without tree or garden. Og had thought of nothing here but security and strength: "Edrei" means "strength." Ruins and rocks alike are black as if scathed by lightning.

This adventurous traveller ascended the terrace roof of a house to obtain a general view, and saw several squares, towers, temples, churches, and mosques; the inhabitants are chiefly fanatical Moslems: and while afterwards copying an inscription he was struck down with a club, and had to escape for his life to the house of the sheikh of a small Christian community, who protected him till midnight with a Druse guard, when he and his party fled from Edrei, scarcely venturing to hope they should ever reach the plain in safety. The night was bitterly cold, their wounds were stiff and painful, and the mournful howl of the jackal, the sharp-ringing bark of the wolf, and the savage growl of the hyena were heard all around: they saw by the bright starlight and the flashing eyes that the rocks were tenanted by brute enemies as bloodthirsty as the men. Here was a practical illustration of Isaiah's prediction: "The wild beasts of the desert shall also meet with the wild beasts of the island, and the satyr shall cry to his fellow."

"The Lord hath a sacrifice in Bozrah, and a great slaughter in the land of Idumea."

How is all this scenery so recently explored, repeopled from the pages of our Bible! We must pass on with Moses from Arnon to Edrei. (Deut. iii. 1—5.)

"Then we turned, and went up the way to Bashan: and Og the king of Bashan came out against us, he and all his people, to battle at Edrei. And the Lord said unto me, Fear him not: for I will deliver him and all his people, and his land, into thy hand; and thou shalt do unto him as thou didst unto Sihon king of the Amorites, which dwelt at Heshbon. So the Lord our God delivered into our hands Og also, the king of Bashan, and all his people: and we smote him until none was left to him remaining. And we took all his cities at that time: there was not a city which we took not from them, threescore cities, all the region of Argob, the kingdom of Og in Bashan. All these

cities were fenced with high walls, gates, and bars; beside unwalled towns a great many."

It will be observed by the Bible-reader, that Og was not conquered in his own stronghold; he never could have been. "We confess," says Mr. Cyril Graham, "we had often wondered how it happened that Og had been brought to fight in the plain; now from a casual notice in other parts of Scripture, (Josh. xxiv. 12), we actually find that God sent a special scourge among these Rephaim, in the shape of swarms of hornets, which we may conclude harassed them so much in their stone houses, that they preferred the alternative of meeting the Israelites, to perishing from the stings of those creatures."

God had promised this by Moses (Exod. xxiii. 28)—

"And I will send hornets before thee, which shall drive out the Hivite, the Canaanite, and the Hittite, from before thee.

"Moreover the Lord thy God will send the hornet among them until they that are left, and hide themselves from thee, be destroyed." (Deut. vii. 20.)

And Joshua speaks of it as being fulfilled. (See Josh. xxiv. 11—13.)

Edrei fell into the hands of Moses, who gave it to the half-tribe of Manasseh, with all the rest of Og's sixty cities, in the region of Argob in Bashan. The conquest appears to have been completed by Jair the son of Manasseh.

Having now an idea of "Argob," or the stony, let us return to the *Hauran*, that province of Eastern Palestine, to the south of it, twice mentioned by Ezekiel in defining the borders of the Promised Land in a day, which even to us is yet future (chap. xlvii. 16—18):

"And the east side ye shall measure from Hauran, and from Damascus, and from Gilead, and from the land of Israel by Jordan, from the border unto the east sea. And this is the east side."

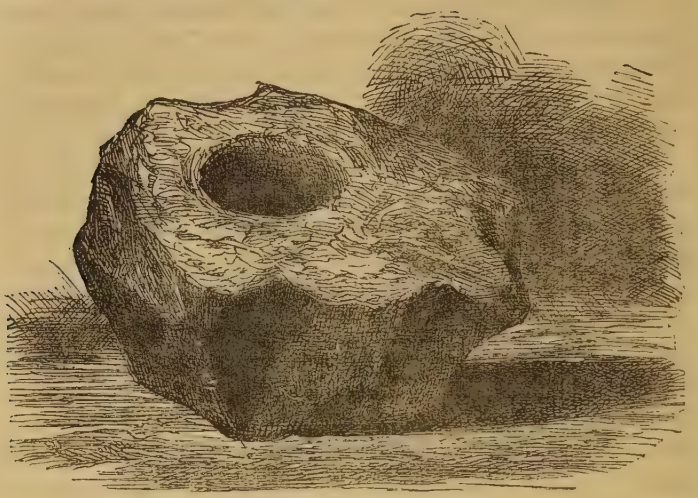
We have heard already of foliage and herds of the "oaks of Bashan," the "fat bulls" and "kine of Bashan." The plain of the Hauran is as rich, and dotted over with a hundred towns and villages, composed of the same old stone houses, mostly *deserted*, but *not* ruined; and about them we have something more to say.

Mr. Porter and Mr. Graham both witness to the wonderful productiveness of that deep, black, loamy earth, with its luxuriant grass and teeming crops of grain. No part of Palestine can be compared to it in fertility, and no wonder that the pastoral tribes of Reuben, Gad, and Manasseh preferred these wooded hills and grassy places of Eastern Palestine, to the bleak, bare range, which they saw on the west of the Jordan from the heights of Moab. You may in idea ascend the heights of the old castle of Salcah (see the picture in our fourth tract), and then open the forty-eighth chapter of the prophet Jeremiah. For it is the old cities of Kerioth and Bethgamul, Bozrah and Salcah, standing as they stood in the days of Abraham and Lot, the cities of the Rephaim in Ashteroth Karnaim, of the Zuzims in Ham, and the Emims in the plain of Kiriathaim (Gen. xiv.), that adventurous recent explorers now enable stay-at-home travellers to realize.

Cities still standing,—not ruined cities, but desolate and without inhabitant,—cities of four and five hundred houses composed of everlasting slabs of stone; the thick walls are built of large square stones, the floors and the flat roofs are slabs of stone, the doors and the window-shutters also stone, turning on pivots of stone.

The frontispiece of this tract shews you one of these doors, which is now in the British Museum.

Here also is a sketch of the socket in which such a door has turned.



Race after race have dwelt and died in these stone cities from the Rephaim downwards, their giant builders and first occupants, soon after the Flood. They were constructed to endure, like the pyramids of Egypt, by the children of Ham, according to the solid simplicity and massive grandeur of their specific architectural taste, whether evidenced in Egypt, Assyria, or Canaan.

The black basalt of which these cities are composed, is almost as hard as iron. "I measured," says Mr. Porter, "a door in Kerioth; it was nine feet high, and four and a half feet wide, and ten inches thick. I saw folding stone gates in another town in the mountains, still larger, just such as a race of giants would build. They are, I believe, eternal witnesses of the narratives by Moses of the conquests of Jehovah, and the only specimens in the

world of the ordinary private dwellings of remote antiquity."

The monuments designed by imperial Rome are fast mouldering to ruin in this land; Greek temples and tombs are shattered or prostrate in the dust,—but the simple massive houses of the Rephaim are perfect as if only completed yesterday.

"In the Beth-gamul of Jeremiah xlviii., not far south of Kerioth," says Mr. Graham, "I wandered about quite alone in the old streets of the town; entered one by one the houses, went upstairs, looked into the rooms, and made a careful survey all around. So perfect was every street, every house, and every room, that I could almost have fancied, as I was wandering alone in this city of the dead, seeing all perfect and yet not hearing a sound, that I had come upon one of those enchanted palaces that one reads of in the 'Arabian Nights,' where the population of a whole city had been petrified for hundreds of years.

"These old houses are perfectly adapted to receive new tenants. The Druses, supposed descendants of the old Moabites, are now the only settled inhabitants of a few of them; and all they do in taking possession, is to throw down a mat or a piece of carpet, and to bring with them the few cooking utensils of which they have need. When they shut their stone doors, they are secure from all attacks. As soon as the early rains fall, they may begin to sow in the fertile soil around these ancient dwellings; but, as the corn ripens, their difficulties increase. They must be constantly on the watch to defend families, flocks, and corn, against the Arab—the 'wild-ass man,' the son of Hagar, of Genesis xvi. 12, 'whose hand is against every man, and every man's hand against him, and who dwells in

the presence of all his brethren.' Oh, how old is the heritage of the desert!—as old as these old stone dwellings of the people of the land in Ishmael's time!"

The Moabites and Ammonites, as descendants of Lot, were permitted to destroy the Hamites. The Lord said to Moses—

"Distress not the Moabites, neither contend with them in battle: for I will not give thee of their land for a possession; because I have given Ar unto the children of Lot for a possession. The Emims dwelt therein in time past, a people great, and many, and tall, which also were accounted giants." (Deut. ii. 9, 10, 11).

The Moabites dwelt to the south of Bashan; we are aware of *their* dark descent, and may now be induced to search for all that is said of them in Scripture. The nursery of this race was Zoar; and while the roving and unsettled brother, Ammon, wandered to the north-east, and took possession of the tracks formerly occupied by the giant Zuzim, or children of Ham (see Gen. xiv. and Deut. ii. 21), Moab, whose habits were more settled and peaceful, remained nearer to the south-east of the Dead Sea.

We have now, however, realized Israel, under the guidance of their great law-giver, entering on the country beyond Arnon.

The tribes of Reuben, Gad, and the half tribe of Manasseh, inhabited for seven centuries these ancient cities of Bashan, and dwelt in the stead of their former occupants (see 1 Chron. v. 22), till they themselves were carried captive by Tiglath-Pileser, to the cities of the Medes, to Ghozan, and Halah, and Habor, which latter is, according to Mr. Layard, the modern Khabour, in the region of the Euphrates.

The narrative is continued in the way of successive events, in Numbers xxii. 2:

"And Balak the son of Zippor [king of the Moabites at this time] saw all that Israel had done to the Amorites. And he sent messengers to Balaam, saying, Come, I pray thee, curse me this people; for they are too mighty for me."

Led to the top of Pisgah (whence Moses himself afterwards went to survey the Promised Land, west of the Jordan, and to die), Balaam gazes also from these hills on the mighty host abiding in their tents, and, moved by the resistless power of God's Spirit, owns that he dare neither curse nor defy this people whom the Lord hath blessed, whom God hath brought out of Egypt, who have as it were the strength of an unicorn; who are to rise up as a great lion, and not lie down till they eat of the prey and drink the blood of the slain.

How thankful we ought to be in these latter days, for the books that are constantly coming out to illustrate the Bible, and to prove to modern eyes the extreme accuracy of its historical details! Chapter after chapter in the Old Testament, full of ancient names and threatening prophecies, hitherto of apparently no concern to *us*, is often now suddenly brought to notice, as an indisputable document that verifies the research of a recent traveller, or the discoveries of an eminent antiquarian. And so God in His own time restores the old inhabitants of that particular region to our memory. Thus the learned, who may hitherto have studied every book *but* their Bible, are not left without witness to direct their attention to the inspired volume, which may lead them in the way of eternal life.

The first twenty years of this century revealed the existence of these cities by the travels of Burckhardt (who followed Seetzeen through the desolate region), disguised as an Arab, and professing to be a merchant in search of saltpetre, the "gunpowder salt," which accumulates profusely

within those deserted chambers; but otherwise all this fair land of Eastern Palestine lay hidden from the eyes of the men of the West, from the time that the Saracen power superseded the Roman in that locality. Ishmael has long entered into the inheritance of Isaac, and the promise of dominion to Israel from the Nile to the Euphrates *has yet to be fulfilled.*

Race after race has left its mighty marks in Bashan: the giants their ponderous workmanship, of the character of our own Druidical stones. Then follow Jewish masonry and names; Greek temples and inscriptions; Roman roads; Christian churches; Saracenic mosques; Turkish desolations,—all alike confirming the perfect accuracy and truth of the Bible history. *And, more strange than all,* will be the winding up of the wondrous tale of successive empires in Eastern Palestine, according to the voice of prophecy, *in a return of God's people Israel to these selfsame ancient cities.*

The last blessing of Moses to Dan, is—

"Dan is a lion's whelp, he shall leap from Bashan." (Deut. xxxiii. 22.)

not Reuben, or Gad, or Manasseh, who in the time of Moses received this possession, but Dan, whose name is blotted from the list of the tribes in the book of Revelation.

In Isaiah's wondrous prophecies of restoration to Israel he says:

"For thou shalt break forth on the right hand and on the left; and thy seed shall inherit the Gentiles, and make the desolate cities to be inhabited." (Isaiah liv. 3).

"And I will multiply men upon you, all the house of Israel, *even* all of it: and the cities shall be inhabited, and the wastes shall be builded. And they shall say, This land that was desolate is become like the garden of Eden; and the waste and desolate and ruined cities are fenced, and are inhabited." (Ezek. xxxvi. 10, 35).

"Is Ephraim my dear son? is he a pleasant child? for since I spake against him I do earnestly remember him still: therefore my bowels are troubled for him: I will surely have mercy upon him, saith the LORD. Set thee up waymarks, make thee high heaps: set thine heart toward the highway, even the way which thou wentest: turn again, O virgin of Israel, turn again to these thy cities." (Jer. xxxi. 20, 21).

That it was given to Moses of the Holy Spirit to see the scattering and the *final* return of His people, the whole book of Deuteronomy forbids us to doubt, especially chapter xxx. 4, 5:

"If any of thine be driven out unto the outmost parts of heaven from thence will the LORD thy God gather thee, and from thence will he fetch thee: And the LORD thy God will bring thee into the land which thy fathers possessed, and thou shalt possess it: and he will do thee good, and multiply thee above thy fathers."

He was then in the wilderness with Israel in their last year before their entrance to the land.

This book of Deuteronomy appears to have been written in the plains of Moab, a short time before his death, 1451 B.C.: his death itself, as recorded in the 34th chapter, was probably added by his successor, Joshua; and the last four verses of that chapter, which concern Joshua, were, it is most likely, written by Ezra the scribe, when he collected the books of the Old Testament together.

A little before the repeating of the Law, Moses had held up to the suffering people the serpent of brass upon a pole, that every one who was bitten, when he looked upon it, might live (Num. xxi. 9), —the type, as our Lord tells us (John iii. 14, 15), of His own lifting up on the Cross, "that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life." That shore of the Red Sea, where the Israelites were bitten, is still remarkable for abounding in serpents, as indeed the wilderness does generally. In Deut. viii. 15, Moses calls it "a

great and terrible wilderness, wherein were fiery serpents, and scorpions, and drought"; yet we never hear of the people being bitten and killed by them till now. They had been marvellously protected from this, as from other dangers of the way; and the protection was only now withdrawn on account of their oft-repeated sin of murmuring.

They had, however, nearly finished their course in the wilderness, and would not much longer murmur against their great leader, for he was about to ascend Mount Nebo, and to die! And he left them saying, "Secret things belong to God; but those things which are revealed belong unto us, and to our children for ever, that we may do all the words of the Law." (Deut. xxix. 29.)

Yes! he left behind him the revealed and written Law of God for that people, besides the wonderful book of Job.

He had looked upon all Egypt's glory. He had seen a nation fall before him in the wilderness; he had been made the means of giving God's revelation to earth; and now he himself was about to pass into the fuller revelations of heaven.

Having ordered the elders of Israel on the day that they should pass over Jordan, to set up great stones and plaster them with plaster, and themselves to write upon them all the words of the Law very plainly (Deut. xxvii. 2.), Moses ascended the Abarim range overlooking the Dead Sea.

The accomplished recent traveller, Mr. H. B. Tristram, has given a most interesting description of the mountain which *he* considers to be Mount Nebo: "On those brows overlooking the mouth of the Jordan, over against Jericho, we halted, and gazed at a prospect on which it has been permitted to few European eyes to feast. The day was clear,

and revealed to us (whether or not we were standing on the exact spot), at least, the very same landscape as that on which Moses, the servant of the Lord, closed the eye of his mortality. The height of this brow cannot be less than 4,500 feet, so completely does it overlook the heights of Hebron and of central Judea. To the eastward, as we turned round, rolled in one vast unbroken expanse the goodly Belka, one boundless plain, one waving ocean of corn and grass, stretching down towards the rosy granite peaks of Arabia. Well may such wealth of soil have poured forth its teeming myriads of flocks and herds, the riches of that mighty sheepmaster, the king of Moab of old. Not a tree nor a bush could be seen; but the glass revealed the black tents of the Beni Sakk'r, dotted in clusters far and near, testifying that the population, though vagrant and far short of the teeming multitude of the Roman cities, must still be very great. Turning westwards, in front of us, two or three lines of mountain terraces descended to the Dead Sea. It lay like a long strip of molten metal beneath our feet, with the sun mirrored on its surface. Then, almost in the centre of the line a break in the ridge, and a green spot below, marked Engedi, the nest of the ancient rock-dwellers, and now of the wild goat. Still far below us, and lower too, than the ridge of Hebron, we saw Bethlehem, and not the buildings of Jerusalem, but all the familiar points in the neighbourhood; the Mount of Olives, with the church at its top; the gap in the hills leading up from Jericho, and the rounded heights of Benjamin on its other side. Closer still beneath us, had Israel's vast camp extended in front of our green-fringed terraces."

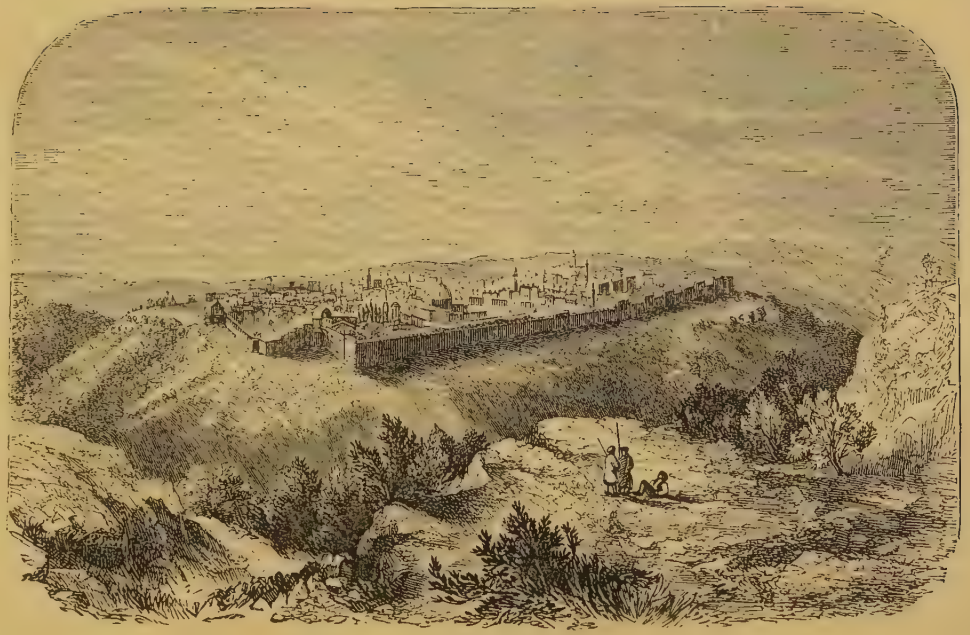
The dark, sinuous bed of Jordan, clearly defined near its mouth, was soon lost in dim haze. Then,

looking over that, the eye rested on Gerizim's rounded top, and further still opened the plain of Esdraelon, the shoulder of Carmel, just showing to the right of Gerizim; while the faint and distant bluish haze beyond it told us that *there* was the sea, the utmost sea, the Mediterranean. It seemed as if but a whiff of air were needed to reveal it clearly. Northwards again, rose the outline of Tabor, aided by which we could identify Gilboa. The snowy top of Hermon was mantled with cloud, and Lebanon's highest range must have towered behind it; but in front, due north of us, stretched the dark forests of Ajalon, with the steep bold sides of mountains, terminating in Mount Gilead; the Bozrah too was distinctly visible.

"And the Lord showed Moses all the land of Gilead, unto Dan, and all Naphtali, and all the land of Judah, unto the utmost sea; and the south, and the plain of the valley of Jericho, the city of palm trees, unto Zoar." (Deut. xxxiv. 1—3).

He went up as he had often done before, to be alone with God—but to return to men no more. Farewell, then, to Moses as he ascends Mount Nebo—his eye not dim, nor his natural force abated, though he had borne the burden of 120 years.

He was not sinless; he was not to be worshipped; and lest he should have been (for never was human being so visibly endued with Divine power), God marked his only recorded sin with punishment,—the great punishment of not entering the Promised Land; but that circumstance was employed as a type, that *the Law*, which he personified, cannot conduct us into the heavenly Canaan. Joshua, who took possession, is, as his name signifies, the type of Jesus, through whom only is obtained the "abundant entrance" "by grace and not by works."



JERUSALEM.

THE TIMES OF THE BOOK OF JOSHUA.

JOSHUA, MOSES' MINISTER.

No. XI.

THE last chapter of Deuteronomy in our Bibles may in former days have belonged rather to the succeeding Book of Joshua; for the Hebrew Bible, as we have shewn you, was written in columns on parchment or leather, and without the present divisions of chapter and verse. These were chiefly adopted for the convenience of finding particular passages; and the holy books were first thus divided by Cardinal Hugo only about 600 years ago.

The first *English* Bible divided into verses was printed at Geneva in 1560, and our own King James's "Authorized English Bible," published in 1611, and now in use, adopted these divisions from Archbishop Parker's, or "The Bishop's Bible," published previously.

The substance of the last chapter of Deuteronomy, —the death of Moses, was presented to you in our last Tract; and now we begin the *historical* books of the Bible which carry on the narrative beyond Moses as far as Esther, the beautiful Jewess who became the Persian Queen.

These books are in number *twelve*, and they take in the history of well-nigh a thousand years, from the death of Moses to the reforms effected by Nehemiah after the seventy years' captivity in Babylon, when a small remnant returned to the land of their fathers, to hold it henceforth as vassals only to superior lords.

The Book of Genesis comprised to the death of Joseph, 1635 B.C. 2369 years.
From Joseph's death to the birth of Moses there were . . . . 64 ,,
Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy were all written during the life of Moses . . 120 ,,
The Book of Joshua comprises . 25 ,,
and brings us to the 2578th year of the world, and to the 1427th year before the coming of Christ.

The Book of Joshua contains the stirring story of a great military hero, living in the age of miracles; and its first twelve chapters, at least, bear internal evidence of having been written by an eye-witness, if not by Joshua's own pen, with here and there an addition by an after scribe. In the last chapter—Joshua himself is said to have written the words of the Covenant—the words of the last Covenant he made with the people in the Book of the Law of God; but in the whole Book of Joshua, otherwise, there is a striking and marked change from Moses speaking in the first person, and recording the words of God and his own words, viz., 'The Lord said unto me,' etc., to the narrative of what *Joshua* did and said—by some one else—perhaps by Eleazar, the high priest and son of Aaron, whose duty it was, not only to instruct the people by reading and speaking to them of the law, but also by writing to instruct posterity in the acts and ways of God. We are first introduced to Joshua by a touching title: "Moses' minister," and informed that the Lord spake to him, saying,

"Arise, go over this Jordan.

"As I was with Moses, so I will be with thee: I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee.

"Only be thou strong and very courageous, that thou mayest observe to do according to all the law, which Moses my servant

commanded thee: turn not from it to the right hand or to the left, that thou mayest prosper whithersoever thou goest.

"This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success."

Now this is the book—*none other than the Pentateuch*, which people who fancy themselves wise, are setting aside as unworthy to be believed in one part and another, at this advanced age of the world,—but still it holds true, dear friends, and may you always believe it—that those who turn not from it to the right hand or to the left *are prospered* like Joshua whithersoever they go. They *do* find cause still "to meditate therein day and night," and *so* "they make their way prosperous," and *so* "they have good success."

Is not this the history of our Bible-woman movement? The blessed Book is our crest and our shield. It goes before us in all our ways, and upon our trust in this ancient, everlasting Word of the God of Israel—He still, to this hour, bestows His blessing. Go, read afresh the marvellous narratives in the first twelve chapters of the Book of Joshua, and observe how the Lord was with that new leader —even "as he was with Moses."

From the acacia groves of Shittim, on the east of Jordan, Joshua sends two men to view the land, even Jericho. When escaped to the scarped heights that overhang it, by the advice of Rahab, for three days, they doubtless did thus view it, and brought back the news that the history of Israel, was known to the Canaanites; how the Lord had dried up the water of the Red Sea for His people; and also the wars of Moses with the giants Sihon and Og whom he had utterly destroyed; which had caused the hearts of the men of Jericho to melt with fear.

And now the majesty of their *entrance* on the wilderness life is mated by their *exit* from it; and the true measure of the *first* miracle, illustrated, by the *second* sweeping of a path through the waters, the Divine object being one and the same in both miracles, a rapid transit of the people altogether.

At the brim of the water stand the priests with the ark upon their shoulders. At a distance of a mile behind followed the great mass of the people.

Suddenly as the soles of the feet of the priests touch the water, the full bed of the Jordan is dried before them, "very far," as far as the eye could reach (the names of cities are given as boundaries), the waters which come down from the Sea of Tiberias stood and rose up upon an heap. (Moses had said that the Red Sea had stood "up right as an heap;" and also that its waters were a wall on the right hand and the left.) Now the priests go forward, enter the river, and stand firm on dry land in the midst of Jordan. The waters of Jordan are piled up above, and cut off from the Dead Sea,* and the host of Israel pass over on either side of the symbol of the divine presence, while the priestly bearers halt in the middle of the bed. This is all recorded in the fourth chapter of Joshua, and referred to in the Book of Psalms.

* This sea, scripturally called "the Salt Sea," (by the western world "the Dead Sea,") is the final receptacle of the river Jordan, the lowest and largest of the three lakes which interrupt the rush of his descending course from the Lebanon. The Salt Sea has no visible outlet. The level of its waters, more than 1,300 feet below the surface of the ocean, is the lowest in the world. It is nowhere said that the sinful cities of the plain were submerged in this sea. They had been destroyed 450 years before the passage of the Israelites, by "fire and brimstone rained from heaven."

"The sea saw, and fled, Jordan was driven back. . . . .
"What ailed thee, O thou sea, that thou fleddest? thou Jordan, that thou wast driven back?" (Ps. cxiv. 3, 5.)

These two verses settle the whole question. The stupendous scale of both miracles, and the value of every word of Scripture employed to describe them, is corroborated by a decisive proof when Joshua (the sole adult survivor of the *first* miracle except Caleb,) describes it to the generation born in the wilderness, and to those who were 'little ones' at the crossing of the Jordan (see Deut. i. 39), and in that day had no knowledge between good and evil.

"For the Lord your God dried up the waters of Jordan from before you, until ye were passed over, as the Lord your God did to the Red Sea, which he dried up from before *us*, until *we* were gone over." Josh. iv. 23.

Joshua certainly knew the facts of both miracles, and had not the one been the counterpart of the other, *he* would not have compared them; and the change of persons from 'you' and 'ye' to 'us' and 'we' distinguishes with historical exactness the past and the then present generation.

The people of Israel might have proceeded towards the Promised Land without crossing the Red Sea at all; and they might have crossed the Jordan where it was a brook, near its source; but they were ordered to cross *its full stream*, in order that the nations they were to conquer might perceive their mission from God; and it is said, "neither was there spirit in them any more, because of the children of Israel."

The twelve memorial stones which the tribes had by command, brought up out of the bed of Jordan were pitched upon the rising ground of Gilgal, where Joshua encamped to the east of Jericho, and which

then overlooked a forest of palms between them and the city of Jericho. The last tree of this palm forest, seen as late as 1838, has now disappeared. It must have recalled to the invaders, the palm groves of Egypt, and as it was the time of the barley harvest they must have seen stretching through the spaces under the trees, fields of ripe corn.

Here at Gilgal the reproach of their uncircumcision was rolled away, for this ordinance had been neglected in the desert wanderings; and the next event was the celebration of the Passover—a new observance to most of the people, the generation who had been educated in the free, pure air of the wilderness, while their fathers were dying out for their unbelief.

The Passover had been observed only once in Egypt, and once again at Sinai, and this was its third celebration.

On the next morning, the manna ceased to fall: the "old corn" of the Promised Land supplied its place.

The great *new* leader of Israel had already been owned by the people, all that he commanded them they had promised to *do*, and wherever he sent them to *go*. Like Moses, he was the guardian and student of the written revelation. Each read it to the people, and caused them to act upon it. Joshua lived twenty-five years after taking them into the land; and as he died at 110, he must have known for forty-five years what was the bondage of Egypt, and must have seen all, except Caleb, die around him in the wilderness; and he was now appointed as the conquering general of the people with whom God had made a covenant, to destroy every other league and covenant existing among the Canaanitish

nations. That God had *given* him the strength and courage to which he was exhorted may be seen in the narrative of his going up to the man with the drawn sword, by Jericho, saying, "Art thou for us or for our adversaries?"

"And he said, Nay; but as captain of the host of the LORD am I now come. And Joshua fell on his face to the earth, and did worship, and said unto him, What saith my lord unto his servant?

"And the captain of the LORD's host said unto Joshua, Loose thy shoe from off thy foot; for the place whereon thou standest is holy. And Joshua did so."

"*So* the Lord was with Joshua;" and then came the first act in "the wars of the Lord," the siege of Jericho, and the falling of its massive walls to the blare of the trumpets; and the saving of Rahab according to promise, and the forbidding of the "accursed thing" to be taken from the city. This was neither silver nor gold, nor brass nor iron, for those were to come into the treasury of the Lord; but some symbol or sign, as we may fairly conclude, which was prominent in idolatrous worship.

Let us look for the light that Scripture throws on this "accursed thing."

It is spoken of by Moses in the seventh chapter of Deuteronomy as to be found among the seven nations of Canaan, greater and mightier than Israel whom the Lord would destroy utterly before them, and with whom therefore no covenant was to be made.

"The graven images of their gods shall ye burn with fire: thou shalt not desire the silver or gold *that is* on them, nor take *it* unto thee, lest thou be snared therein: for it *is* an abomination to the Lord thy God.

"Neither shalt thou bring an abomination into thine house, lest thou be a cursed thing like it: *but* thou shalt utterly detest it, and thou shalt utterly abhor it; for it *is* a cursed thing."

Now Achan's sin was the first open transgression of this command. The Lord tells Joshua (vii. 11) that Israel have taken of the accursed thing, and have stolen, and dissembled also, and have put it among their own stuff; and Achan's confession was not of the secreting of any visible idol, but only of "the goodly garment," and of "200 shekels of silver" and a "wedge or tongue of gold" of fifty shekels weight.

In the fifth verse of the seventh chapter of Deuteronomy, of the "graven images" above defined as the accursed thing, it is said:—

"Thus shall ye deal with them; ye shall destroy their altars, and break down their images, and cut down their groves, and burn their graven images with fire."

Now it had long been known by Hebrew scholars that the word which is here translated "groves" should have been left a proper name, as in the original, and that this name was Assheerah. Even before the Assyrian sculptures were brought to light Dr. Margoliouth had pointed out that the Assheerah was a *symbolical tree* representing the host of heaven. "No one," says Mr. Ferguson, "can now read the passages in the Bible referring to the worship of the groves without seeing that they do not mean a group of trees, but must refer to just such a symbol or idol as that here figured." In Judges iii. 7 it is said, "the children of Israel forgat the Lord their God, and served Baalim and the groves." There is always a tradition of a sacred tree in all Eastern systems of idolatry, and this tree of the Assyrian monuments is, as we have seen,

SACRED TREE AND HEATHEN CHERUBIM.

very often accompanied by the symbol of the "presence" of Ashur over it (see p. 39) *to which presence alone belonged worship and sacrifice.* This presence attended the king in his battles, and was

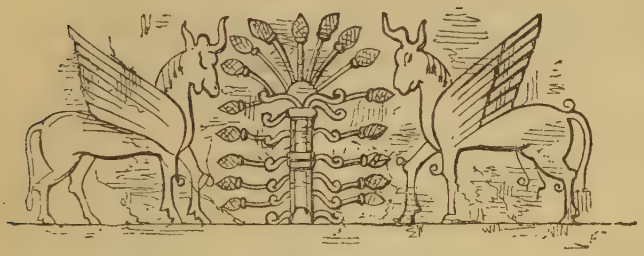
THE PRESENCE OF ASSHUR IN THE TRIUMPHAL PROCESSION.

carved on his signet, and embroidered on his robes.

A ROYAL CYLINDER OR SIGNET.

What a beautiful reminder though from a heathen source, that all the acts of kings and rulers should be done as in the presence of the Lord! But what does Achan confess that he has stolen? "A goodly Babylonish garment." In the British Museum we have a fine carved specimen of such a garment, *with no less* than ten sacred trees embroidered upon it. It is found under a glass in the lobby chamber of the Assyrian department, and the date attached to it is 1120 *before Christ*, and three hundred years after Joshua's time. Nevertheless, there is evidence in the Book of Joshua of a goodly garment coming from Babylon, and being an "accursed thing," probably from its idolatrous embroidery. It is fringed with the Assheerah, dress and helmet also, and similar emblems odious to God, as caricatures of the Cherubic forms at

Eden's gate, are found by careful search, though not at first obvious to the eye, on the dress of the kings of Nineveh, as well as on the winged figures that



SACRED TREE AND GRIFFINS ON DRESS OF KINGS OF NINEVEH.

attend them; so that there was long-enduring meaning in this peculiar ornament, and owing no doubt to its widespread use among the Canaanitish nations also, did it become such a snare to Israel in the after times of the Judges and the Prophets. We now see how closely connected with the worship of Baal were the *Chammânîm*, rendered in the margin of most passages "Sun Images" (see 2 Chron. xxxiv. 4). During King Josiah's reformation he brake down the altars of Baalim, in his twelfth year, and the *Sun Images that were on high above them* he cut down, and the groves (or Asshecrah), etc. In Elijah's time the prophets of Baal were four hundred and fifty, and the prophets of the "groves" four hundred, which ate at Jezebel's table (1 Kings xviii. 19).

The other "accursed thing" that Achan had taken was the "wedge" or tongue or triangle of gold, which another Babylonian monument of the same date, 1120 B.C. throws light upon. These

two curious Babylonian monuments in the museum are thought to have been landmarks, and are covered with curses on those who remove them. They are at the head of the stairs which descend to SENNACHERIB'S hall. One of them is of black marble, in the shape of a massive fish. On the head, which is three-sided, a large serpent is carved, and around him, are scattered arrow-headed characters, which decipherers say, commence the curses of the inscription. An arrow-head or wedge also appears as an offering on an altar. The early Babylonians worshipped their god "Anu" (supposed to be Noah) under the form of a wedge. "Anu" means also "the word." There is a remarkable stone altar now in the National Library of Paris, which was found among the ruins of Babylon upon which is laid a *long triangular wedge*, thus shown to have been *worshipped* in Chaldea; perhaps as the first letter of the earliest alphabet, of which our A retains the outline. This may have been the wedge of gold that Achan stole.

All these idolatries of men and kings were "accursed" in the sight of Jehovah. They broke His *first*

commandment, and from the decree for the stoning and burning of Achan for the sake of the Babylonish garment and the wedge of gold—to *all* such sin committed through the reigns of all the kings of Judah and Israel, the curse of the Lord extended, and the people were punished accordingly, during their trial or probation era of almost 800 years in the land of promise.

And, alas, through the reigns of all the kings, Israel built them images *and groves* "on every high hill and under every green tree" (1 Kings xiv. 23). When it came to Manasseh's building altars for all the host of heaven in the two courts of the house of the Lord, *and setting up a graven image of the groves* that he had made, in the very temple of Solomon,* the *trial* era of the chosen nation was declared to be at an end: "Cast them out, . . . let them go forth," saith the Lord. "I will cause them to be removed into all kingdoms of the earth, . . . for that which Manasseh did in Jerusalem" (Jer. xv. 1, 4), "to be chastised seven times for their sins" (Lev. xxvi. 18, 24, 28), "to receive at the Lord's hand double for all their sins." (Isa. xl. 2.)

But if there were this sad *ending* to their probation, they were only just *entering* upon it, under their great hero Joshua. Jericho has fallen to the sound of his trumpets, and Ai has bowed to his spear, and now he builds an altar unto the Lord God of Israel in Mount Ebal.

"As Moses the servant of the Lord commanded the children of Israel, as it is written in the book of the law of Moses, an altar of whole stones, over which no man hath lift up any iron: and they offered thereon burnt offerings unto the Lord, and sacrificed peace offerings.

"And he wrote there upon the stones a copy of the law of Moses, which he wrote in the presence of the children of Israel.

* 2 Kings xxi. 7.

The people having crossed the Jordan, are come again to Schechem or Nablus, the frontispiece of our third tract. It is marked also on the edge of the map of Eastern Palestine in the same number. It was to Shechem and to Gerizim that it had been foretold that they *would* come again in the fourth generation, according to the vision of their great forefather, bringing Joseph's bones, which they had carried with them, by his desire, through all their forty years of desert wandering (Gen. l. 25); and they buried them in Shechem, in the inheritance of the children of Joseph (Josh. xxiv. 32). "At the mouth of the Valley of Shechem two slight breaks are visible, in the midst of the vast plain of corn—one a white Mussulman chapel, the other a few fragments of stone; the first covers the alleged tomb of Joseph, Ishmael's mark of present triumph over Isaac's exiled race; the other, THE WELL, choked up by ruins, but still the well of 'our father Jacob.'"

Here, while the ark remained in the valley, up the sides of the twin mountains stood the thousands of Israel, the chiefs, the judges, the Levites, the women, the children, and the stranger, six tribes uttering the curses from the barren Ebal, and six the blessings from the pleasant Gerizim, and as each curse and blessing was pronounced there came with a vast voice from each of those living hills the Amen of the consenting multitudes (Josh. viii. 33).

"Those who have seen the spot," says Mr. Mills, "can readily realize the scene. Just where the two mountains approach each other nearest are the two lower spurs, looking like two noble pulpits prepared by nature—and here the Levites would stand to read. The valley running between looks just like the floor of a vast place of worship. The slopes of both mountains recede gradually, and offer room for hundreds of thousands to be conveniently seated.

"An objection has been made, that the distance between the two mountains is too great for the human voice to traverse; and this would have greater force with those who imagine the reading to have taken place on the very summits of the mountains. I am not aware whether any experiment to test the point had ever been made upon the spot, previously to my own. In company with two friends I pitched my tent in the valley, where I supposed the Ark formerly to have stood. I clambered up Gerizim and one friend up Ebal, the third party remaining with the men at the tent. I opened my Bible, and read the command concerning the blessings in Hebrew, and every word was heard most distinctly by the friend in the valley, the Rev. David Edwards of Newport, as well as by Mr. John Williams of Aberystwith, who stood on Mount Ebal. The latter then read the cursings in Welsh, and we heard every word and syllable.

"It has been observed by many authors how much farther one can see and hear in Palestine than in Great Britain, owing to the different state of the atmosphere. Dr. Robinson mentions a spot in Lebanon where the voice can be heard for two miles."

We must now endeavour to settle clearly in our minds the first conquests of Joshua in Western Palestine, accomplished under "the captain of the Lord's host," whom this hero so faithfully served.

There are three divisions in the little slip of country we call Palestine, or the Holy Land, on the Mediterranean side of Jordan:

1. The central plain of Samaria, or Esdraelon.
2. Galilee on the north of it.
3. Judea on the south.

It is but a strip of country, about the size of Wales. Its length, from Dan to Beersheba, is not 200 miles. Its breadth, from Jordan to the Mediterranean, rarely more than fifty. The highest number of its inhabitants is not reckoned at much more than *double that of London*, *i.e.*, between six and seven millions; but these were thickly congregated, for Wales has only a million of people. Palestine is, above all countries in the world, "the land of ruins—of ruins everywhere—not a hill-top but is covered by the vestiges of some fortress or city of former ages. The Saracens, the Crusaders, the Romans, the Greeks, the Jews, even the Canaanites, have all left their tokens in the land,—so long the "battle-field of Babylon and Egypt," the "high bridge between the Nile and the Euphrates," the "thoroughfare and prize of the world."

And why is it a high bridge? Because a mass of hills or mountain ranges runs up the country, bordered on both sides, east and west, by a broad belt of lowland, sunk deep below the high level. The Canaanites, Philistines, and Phœnicians lived in the plains that skirted the Mediterranean, and the settlements of the tall and haughty Anakim, or Rephaim, lay along the mountain range; it seems that, from superior size and wisdom too, they were the masters of another race of people, called the Amorites,—a degraded nation, and very wicked, and whose "iniquity was full" at the time that Israel entered the land.

The Rephaim had military outposts and fortresses in strong positions among the mountains. They had even a city, Kirjath-sepher, or the book-city, the city of letters, or of archives. Joshua conquered it; but its records are all lost—not come down to us. We know nothing of these "tall" and "haughty"

rulers of old time, but what is said of them in the Bible, and, strange to say, what is carved and written about them on the old Egyptian temple of Karnak.

Yes! they are there,—these men of "Onk" or Anak. They are supposed to have been the shepherd-kings who once conquered Egypt; and in the reign of Rameses III., Egypt conquered them in their own land. She never records her own defeats; but she has described her conquests over the Rephaim as ranging through three centuries.

Another of the ancient cities, named on Karnak, is Hebron, or Arba, where Abraham lived, died, and was buried. This city "was built seven years before Zoan, in Egypt" (Num. xiii. 22).

The victories of Joshua comprise three distinct series of events. First, his campaign against the Amorite league, in which he swept round the mountain of Judah, returning by Hebron to Gilgal. Secondly, the campaign against the northern Canaanites,—"Joshua made war a long time with all those kings" (Josh. xi. 18). Finally, the general statements of particular expeditions against those tall Anakim, till destroyed in their cities and forts,—"there were none of the Anakim left in all the land of the children of Israel," only the Philistines in Gaza, Gath, and Ashdod; and then Joshua took the whole land, and gave it for an inheritance unto Israel by their tribes (Josh. xi. 22). Balaam the son of Beor had been slain in this war (Josh. xiii. 22). Yet these conquests after all were imperfect, very much land remained to be possessed, and seven of Israel's tribes had not yet received their inheritance, when, in the eighteenth chapter of Joshua, it is said :—

"And the whole congregation of the children of Israel

assembled together at Shiloh, and set up the tabernacle of the congregation there."

IT IS MOST IMPORTANT FULLY TO REALISE THE IMPORTANCE OF THE CENTRES OF SHECHEM AND SHILOH, FOR THE SPACE OF 400 YEARS TO ANCIENT ISRAEL.

We have seen that the capital of Ephraim and of the kingdom of Israel was Shechem; its great sanctuary was SHILOH.

Shechem is considered to be the portion given to Joseph by Jacob when near his end—"the portion above his brethren." This central tract and this "good land" were naturally allotted to the powerful house of Joseph in the first division of the country; and it is very true, as has been said, that "we are so familiar with the supremacy of the house of JUDAH, that we are apt to forget its recent date comparatively with that of EPHRAIM."

Alas! as the psalm of Asaph tells us (Ps. lxxviii. 9):—

"The children of Ephraim being armed, and carrying bows, turned back in the day of battle. They kept not the covenant of God, and refused to walk in his law. . . . Then the Lord . . . . refused the tabernacle of Joseph, and chose not the tribe of Ephraim: but chose the tribe of Judah, the Mount Zion which he loved."

The sites of heathen oracles have been always shrines for classic pilgrimages; but the site of SHILOH was completely forgotten from the time of Jerome until the year 1838. *Yet here the tabernacle of the wilderness erected by Joshua abode* 300 *years* (Josh. xviii. 1). The "tent" or "tabernacle," that last relic of the wandering life of the chosen people, is described in the Rabbinical traditions as a structure of low stone walls, with a tent drawn over the top, exactly answering to the Bedouin villages of the present day, where the stone enclosures often remain long after the tribes and tents have vanished. Had

it not been for the precision with which the site of Shiloh is described in the Book of Judges (xxi. 19), its situation could never have been identified with the present "Seilun:"—

"Shiloh, which is on the north side of Bethel, on the east side of the highway that goeth up from Bethel to Shechem, and on the south of Lebonah."

Shiloh is ten miles south of Shechem, and twenty-five north of Jerusalem.

But now there is another scene at Shechem. The stalwart Joshua, the Lord's captain, "goes the way of all the earth, and again he gathers all the tribes here, and the elders and the judges present themselves before God." After reciting the Lord's dealings with them he says:—

"Choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that *were* on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.

"And the people said unto Joshua, The Lord our God will we serve, and His voice will we obey.

"So Joshua made a covenant with the people that day, and set them a statute and an ordinance in Shechem.

"And Joshua wrote these words in the book of the law of God, and took a great stone, and set it up there under an oak, that *was* by the sanctuary of the Lord."

And it is really recorded, in the last chapter of this most interesting book, that

"Israel served the Lord all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders that overlived Joshua, and which had known all the works of the Lord that He had done for Israel."

We have given you JERUSALEM as the frontispiece of this tract, because the name of "the Holy City," the *only* city of the *past*, the *present*, and the *future*, is linked for ever with the Holy Land as its metropolis; but at the same time it is with a special request *that you will observe* that Jerusalem did not

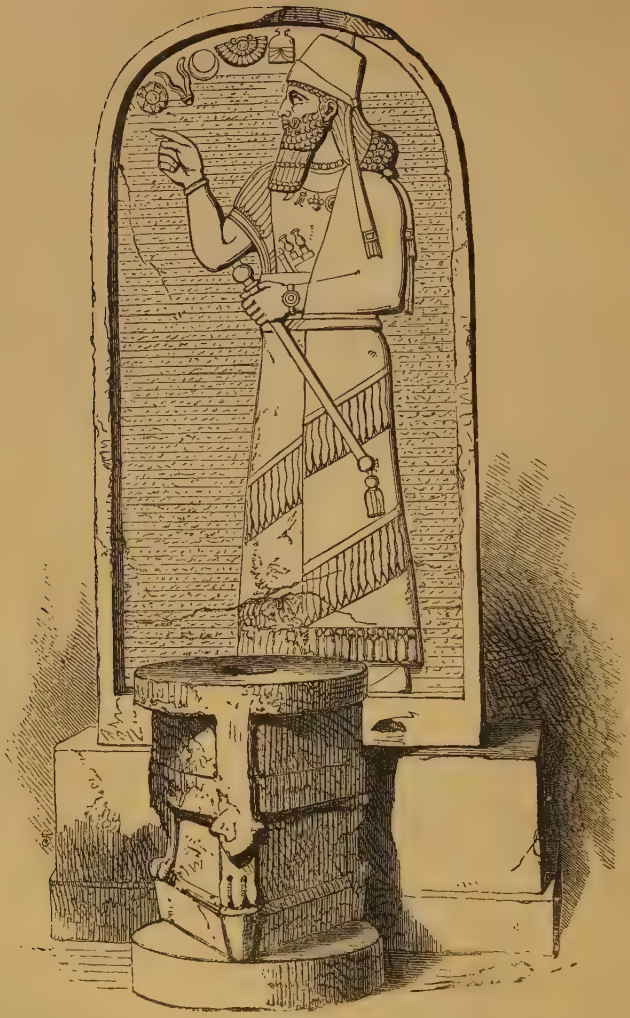
become the capital city of the Jews for 400 years after Joshua's period.

Jerusalem lay long unknown save as a heathen fortress in the midst of the Promised Land. "It is strange to think how often Joshua, Deborah, Samuel, Saul, and even David, must have passed and repassed those gray hills and spacious caverns in which David had hidden himself, when he fled to the mountains, unconscious of the fame reserved for Zion in every future age" (Ezek. v. 5).

"Thus saith the Lord God; This *is* Jerusalem: I have set it in the midst of the nations and countries *that are* round about her."

Jerusalem is situated on the edge of one of the highest table lands of the country. From every other side than that of Hebron, the ascent to it is perpetual. The city is a mountain city, enthroned on a mountain fastness. Deep and precipitous ravines guard it on the west, south, and east. On the north this city is on a level with the mountain plains. A long and deep ravine divides it into two unequal portions, one lower than the other. That on the west is the Mount Zion, and was the early fortress of the Jebusites, and defied the attacks of Joshua.

The eastern hill is lower and smaller. Here was Mount Moriah, and on this brow at present stands the great mosque of Omar. The earliest notices of Jerusalem are in Joshua xii. 10 and xv. 8, when Joshua is said to smite its king. In Judges xix. 10, we hear of "Jebus, which is Jerusalem." It is mentioned also in Judges i. 7. But it is David who removes the seat of government from Hebron to Jerusalem, and who makes it the metropolis of the tribe of Judah 1047 B.C., or 396 years after Joshua's death. Solomon lays the foundation of the Temple, B.C. 1011, or 480 years after the coming out of Egypt.



A KING OF NINEVEH AND HIS ALTAR.

THE TIMES OF THE BOOK OF JUDGES.

No. XII.

"The Book of JUDGES is to the *Old Testament* what the ACTS OF THE APOSTLES and the Book of REVELATION are to the *New*."—*Canon Wordsworth.*

THE Book of JUDGES is connected with the Book of Joshua as closely as Joshua is with the five Books of Moses.

See its first sentence:—

"Now after the death of Joshua it came to pass."

The conquests of the great general, as related in the twelfth chapter of Joshua, seem to be continued in the first chapter of Judges by the houses of Judah and Simeon and Joseph; "the Lord was with *them* (vers. 19, 22); but the tribes of Manasseh, Ephraim, Zebulun, Asher, and Naphthali, are mentioned as *not* driving out the Canaanites; and an angel or messenger of the Lord rebukes them with a voice from God at Bochim, and for a season the people weep and repent. The account of Joshua's death and burial is then repeated (ii. 8, 9), as if taken up again from the close of the Book of Joshua; and the words are quoted thus, that,

"Israel served the Lord all the days of Joshua and all the days of the elders that outlived Joshua, who had seen all the great works of the Lord that he did for Israel."

And then, alas, it is added,

"That when all that generation were gathered to their fathers, then arose another generation after them which knew *not* the Lord, nor yet the works which he had done for Israel."

This new generation forsook the Lord, and served Baalim and Ashtaroth, and the Lord in His anger delivered them "into the hands of spoilers," and "sold them into the hands of their enemies, and they were greatly distressed." Then His mercy mingled with judgment, and it is written :—

"Nevertheless, the Lord raised up JUDGES, and delivered them out of the hands of their enemies all the days of the Judges."

Now here is the key to the plan of the whole book. *Its first fourteen* chapters bring us down to the death of Samson, and are almost entirely a history of these wars of deliverance. The author had a certain design in view; to show that the sufferings of the Hebrews after the death of Joshua were owing to their apostasy from Jehovah and their idolatry. When they repent and obey, they are pardoned and delivered. To illustrate this fact, the writer collects striking fragments of their personal history, which prove his point, between the times of Joshua and Eli. His design does not seem to be to give a complete national history of the Hebrews. If it had been, he would surely have named the number of tribes for whom a judge arose, and the relation in which they stood to other tribes, for a judge was not a king set over all the tribes. These judges were temporary and special deliverers sent by God to meet certain emergencies. They were *not* supreme magistrates succeeding to the authority of Moses and Joshua.

There is a kind of appendix to the Book of Judges, beginning with the 17th chapter, and continuing to the close of the book, in which there is no mention made of any judge; but we find allusions to the "house of God," the "ark" and the "high priest,"

and the period of this part of the history of the people is marked thus :—

"When there was no king in Israel" (Judges xix. 1).

The appendix contains two narratives illustrating the previous times of lawlessness and anarchy, that of Micah, who worshipped molten and graven images, and that of the dreadful history of the Levite's concubine, and the consequent massacre of almost the whole tribe of Benjamin. The appendix, therefore, describes the times of lawlessness, in contrast to the peaceful times described in the Book of RUTH, which originally it is said formed a part of the Book of Judges; but which from the time the Bible was translated into Greek has taken its place as a separate book.

The lawless times are also alluded to in Deborah's song. When travellers were afraid to go by the highways, and chose byways for safety; and when quiet villages seemed to have been forsaken of their inhabitants for fear :

"Then I Deborah arose—a mother in Israel" (Judges v. 7).

To restore, doubtless, the influence of good mothers in the nation; and she stirs up Barak to the conquest of Sisera. Extraordinary mention is made of Deborah. She dwelt in Mount Ephraim, under the palm-tree which was named from her, as the oak was from her predecessor and namesake, Rachel's nurse. The palm-tree is supposed to have been rare in Palestine, and therefore mentioned. Under its shadow the children of Israel came up to Deborah for judgment. She is evidently an inspired prophetess, for she foretold the death of Sisera by the hand of Jael.

The institution of the order of Judges took place before the Hebrews lost their great leader Moses,

who had been their prophet, priest, and even "king in Jeshurun;" *he* appointed for them JUDGES, by Jethro's counsel, "able men, such as fear God; men of truth, hating covetousness," to preside over sections of the people (Ex. xviii. 21). They were chosen at first for *moral* fitness, and while the Levites instructed the people in the Law, the Judges enforced its fulfilment. The Judges mentioned as standing before Joshua (chap. xxiv. 1), had doubtless been elected from the same class of patriarchal senators.

The Levites were also the keepers of the standard weights and measures in the sanctuary, to which, in case of dispute, reference was to be made. The high priest was the chief judge in the nation before kings were appointed, and always in case of need would be supernaturally directed in his decisions, *i.e.*, he would "inquire of the Lord" by the appointed means. Yet we hear of no high priest acting as judge but Eli, and it has been remarked, as a fact of some weight, that none of the special deliverers of Israel called judges, except Samuel, were of the *priestly* tribe, and that few of them became as much noted as Deborah. The judges were fifteen in number.

During their times, *i.e.*, between the days of Joshua and SAMUEL (who combined in his own person the offices of judge, high-priest, and prophet), the Israelites suffered six servitudes:—

1.	To Mesopotamia's king . .	8 years.
2.	To Moab	18 ,,
3.	To Jabin and Sisera . . .	20 ,,
4.	To Midian	7 ,,
5.	To Ammon	18 ,,
6.	To the Philistines . . .	40 ,,
	Total	111 years.

Definite periods are also named, during which they were delivered by the JUDGES from captivity:—

1st	Judge.	Othniel,	who governed	40 years.
2nd	,,	Ehud	,, 80	,,
3rd	,,	Shamgar	,, —	,,
4th	,,	Deborah and Barak	,, 40	,,
5th	,,	Gideon	,, 40	,,
6th	,,	Abimelech	,, 3	,,
7th	,,	Tola	,, 23	,,
8th	,,	Jair	,, 22	,,
9th	,,	Jeppthah	,, 6	,,
10th	,,	Ibzan	,, 7	,,
11th	,,	Elon	,, 10	,,
12th	,,	Abdon	,, 8	,,
13th	,,	Samson	,, 20	,,
14th	,,	Eli	,, 40	,,
15th	,,	Samuel	,, —	,,
			339	
			Add 111	the time of the servitude.

And the total is 450 years.

By the statements of these years it appears that the Book of Judges exactly agrees with St. Paul's reckoning, *if he did thus reckon.* See Acts xiii. 19—20.

"And when God had destroyed seven nations in the land of Chanaan, he divided their land to them by lot.

"And after that he gave *unto them* judges about the space of four hundred and fifty years, until Samuel the prophet."

Such is the reading of our English translation; but this would disagree with the important statement in 1 Kings vi. 1—that the temple of Solomon began to be built in the 480th year after the Exodus—a date which we do not know how to part with, in the Hebrew chronology. Canon Words-

worth, however, who would be the last to trifle with an Apostle's testimony, whether in figures or facts, brings fresh light to this question concerning Old Testament history. He considers that the 450 years in Acts xiii. "is grounded on an erroneous reading and interpretation of St. Paul's words," and says that the *true* reading has been happily restored from the oldest MSS. in the Latin, Coptic, and Armenian versions—viz., that "after about 450 years, *i.e.*, from the great epoch to which St. Paul had referred at the beginning of his speech, the birth of Isaac, the people entered into and possessed the land. The reception of Israel into covenant with God in Isaac *was* about 450 years before their entering the land.

Birth of Isaac	1896 B.C.
Conquest of Canaan . . .	1446 B.C.
	450

It is generally considered that some of the judges judged only *portions* of Canaan, and that *more than one judged at the same time*, in different places. There is reason to suppose this of Samson and Jephthah; the one being judge in Eastern Palestine, and the other in the west, and also that Ibzan, Elan, and Abdon, of whom we know no more than their names, may have lived in the days of Samuel, who *completed* the deliverance of Israel from the Philistines (1 Sam. vii. 1—14), which Samson was only to begin. (See Judges xiii. 5.)

We now perceive how the Book of Judges follows Joshua, as in the New Testament the Acts of the Apostles follows the Gospels, or the life of Jesus the heavenly Joshua. We have seen how every historical book of the Old Testament after Genesis is tied to that which went before it. Every book has successively the story to tell of its own time, and

every book adds something to the course of events, which foretold and prepared the world for the coming of Christ. Therefore, in the walk to Emmaus,

"*Beginning at Moses and all the prophets*, the Lord expounded to the two disciples *in all the Scriptures*, the things concerning himself." (Luke xxiv. 27.)

Canon Wordsworth, in his Notes on the Bible, computes the events of the history as follows:—

Wanderings of Israel	40 years.
Victories of Joshua	17 ,,
First captivity to Nineveh	8 ,,
Othniel—Judge, and rest	40 ,,
Oppression by Moab	18 ,,
Ehud and rest	80 ,,
Shamgar and Jabin	20 ,,
Deborah and rest	40 ,,
Midianitish slavery	7 ,,
Gideon and rest	40 ,,
Abimelech	3 ,,
Tola	23 ,,
Jair	22 ,,
Eli, judge	40 ,,
Samuel, judge	19 ,,
Saul, king	20 ,,
David	40 ,,
Solomon to beginning of Temple	3 ,,
	480 ,,

All the history books of the Old Testament have a prophetic character, and prefigure that future coming. The Books of Joshua, Judges, Samuel, and Kings, are called by the Hebrew church "the *former* prophets."

The *after* prophets filled up the reigns of the Jewish kings till Malachi, the last, who finished his prophecy with the key-note of the coming of Jesus Christ.

But we must turn again to the Judges before we approach the Prophets and the Kings.

The entrance into the land and the building of the Temple were earnests and figures of the entrance opened into heaven, and of the building up of the Christian Church by the sacrifice of Christ upon the cross.

The Book of Judges exhibits the miraculous operations of the Holy Spirit in some of those military heroes who were raised up from time to time to deliver Israel. The acts of only a few persons are recorded as specimens of what God the Holy Ghost wrought by them all; and the eye is often raised from the human agent, *by his personal imperfections*, only to look at what he was in the hands of God. The Book of Judges, like the Book of Revelation, is full of solemn warning, and it has been observed that the main part of both is a history of downfall and decline, in the chosen nation and in the Christian Church, through idolatry. Man glorifies himself and his own inventions and creations instead of his Creator, and the Book of Revelation shows that he will do it more and more to the end of this dispensation.

The Book of Judges is full of what Israel might have done in those wondrous days of miracle, if they had obeyed God; but, on the whole, they seldom answered to their mighty call. They served their own lusts, and sought their own interests. Perhaps they thought themselves more merciful than God when they put the Canaanites to tribute, instead of driving them out at His command; "*their* iniquity was full;" but Israel intermarried with them, and served their gods and kings. They served Baal and Ashtaroth, so the hand of the Lord was against them.

Let us specially notice who the enemies of Israel were.

They were Assyria, Moab, Midian, and the Philistines. All the light that falls upon old Assyria in the present resurrection of her images, casts a ray on the history of the Old Testament. Those enemies were the type of our spiritual enemies. In the strength of Christ we should be ourselves Othniels and Ehuds to the sins which war against our souls. "The actions of these imperfect judges are presented to us by the Holy Spirit," afterwards—* as of those who "by faith subdued kingdoms," such as Barak, Gideon, and Jephthah; "wrought righteousness, stopped the mouths of lions," as Samson; escaped the edge of the sword, as Gideon and Samson; "out of weakness were made strong," as Deborah and Jael, "waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens." Truly Paul takes his examples from the Book of Judges, and therefore we are bound to study their lives and doings. Whatever be wrong or fleshly in the type of these "saviours," Jesus the antitype corrects it. They point the thoughts to a greater Gideon, who now that He is come, teaches us to read the ancient history aright, and to perceive in the story of the fleece (ch. vi. 36), the likeness of the Jewish Church and the Church Universal. The dew of heavenly teaching fell first on the fleece, and the fleece only, and not on the floor around—on the Jewish people alone, while all around was in darkness. Afterwards the dew fell on the floor, and not on the fleece—the Gospel was preached and accepted in the Gentile world, while the Jewish fleece was dry.

There are abounding lessons in the Book of Judges, for the use of modern Christians. We see that sin and misery, in a large measure, often arises from the acts of a single household, as they issued

* Heb. xi. 32.

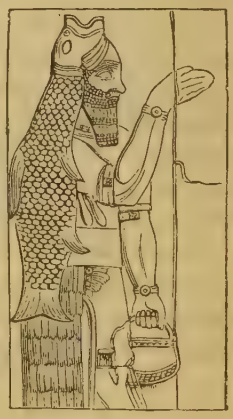
from the household of Micah, whence idolatry spread through the whole tribe of Dan. (See chapters xvii. and xviii.)

"And they set up Micah's graven image which he made, all the time that the house of God was in Shiloh."

The nations all around Israel had other lords and gods than Jehovah. In Samson's history we hear of DAGON the god of the Philistines, whom they believed had delivered Samson their enemy into their hand. They took him and put out his eyes, and bound him with fetters of brass, and put him to grind in the prison house.

Now in the lapse of more than 3000 years the very form and likeness of these graven images had been forgotten; but strange to say God has caused in our day their resurrection, as witnesses of the truth of His word.

In passing along the Nineveh gallery of the British Museum, we come to a figure with a remarkable fish-cloak. It is impossible not to identify this figure, (of which Mr. Layard found several specimens), with the Dagon of Ashod, and the description 1 Sam. v. 4. He who fell before the ark of the Lord, when it was brought into his great temple at Ashdod, "and the head of Dagon and both the palms of his hands were cut off upon the threshold, only the *fishy part* of Dagon was left unto him." Here it is for our inspection. "The head of the fish forms a mitre," says Mr. Layard, "above that of the man, whilst its scaly back and fan-like tail fell as a cloak behind, leaving the human feet and hands exposed. We can scarcely



hesitate to trace this mythic form to the Oannes (Noah) or sacred manfish," who brought to the Chaldeans civilization and arts out of the sea. His worship seems to have extended over Syria, as well as Mesopotamia and Chaldea. In the tenth chapter of Judges we hear, that

"And the children of Israel did evil again in the sight of the Lord, and served Baalim, and Ashtaroth, and the gods of Syria, and the gods of Zidon, and the gods of Moab, and the gods of the children of Ammon, and the gods of the Philistines, and forsook the Lord, and served not him."

Perhaps the most remarkable subject that has yet been found among the ruins of ancient Assyria, was a monstrous form, whose fanciful and hideous head has long pointed ears, and extended jaws, armed with huge teeth. Its body is covered with feathers, its fore feet are those of a lion, its hind legs end in the talons of an eagle, and it has the spreading wings and tail of a bird. Arrayed against this monster is a grand figure, whose dress consists of a plain bodice with a skirt of skin or fur, an under robe fringed with tassels, and the sacred three-horned cap, which marks a supreme god; he has sandals, armlets, and braclets. A long sword is suspended from his shoulders by a belt, and he grasps in each hand a double and winged trident, which would seem to have been the original of the thunder-bolt so often represented in the hand of the Greek Jupiter.

This mighty being is in the act of hurling the tridents against the monster, who turns upon him. In the traits of this Assyrian demon, may be seen the prototype of John Bunyan's Apollyon; though John Bunyan had surely never seen this graven image. It is now happily so uncommon to find an English Bible comprising the Apocryphal or un-

inspired Books, that comparatively few persons will be able readily to turn to one of these by name; we refer to

BEL AND THE DRAGON,

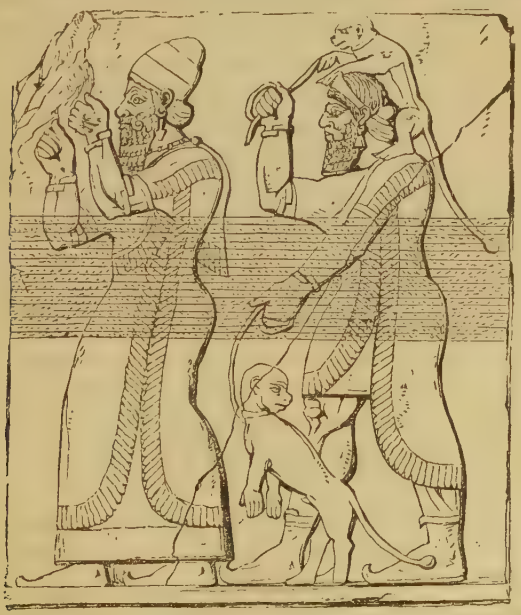
to which the Assyrian illustration might well serve

BEL AND THE DRAGON.

for a frontispiece. It was inserted by the Grecian Jews in the Septuagint, and acquires a new interest in relation to this sculpture. It speaks of the idol

Bel of Babylon, for whom his priests claimed "forty sheep a day and twelve great measures of fine flour, and six vessels of wine, and the king went daily to adore it, while Daniel worshipped the Lord his God." The proof given by the prophet to the king of the hypocrisy of the seventy priests who, with their wives and children, always consumed these provisions, and his authorized destruction of Bel and his temple, and also of the "*dragon in that same place*, which they of Babylon worshipped,"—all these things point curiously back to that which now appears before our eyes in the British Museum. We have here the Chaldean Bel, or Baal, destroying the dragon, and in the Apocryphal but ancient book we have Daniel destroying both.

In the same gallery of the Museum with these gods of Babylon and Nineveh, are stone pictures of

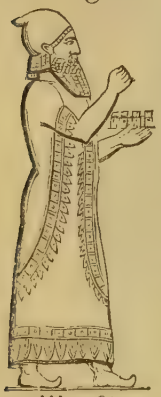


JEWS BRINGING TRIBUTE.

a race of men bringing tribute. A different race from the Assyrian warriors, who, age after age, wear a high-peaked helmet, which distinguishes *them* from any people with whom they may be at war, and *the actual old rusty peaked helmet itself* may be seen in a glass case in the Museum also.

Of one of these tribute-bearers, however, the cap is different; it is composed of felt, or folds of linen. The other has a fillet round his head, and both wear the same curious boots, turned up at the toes; on a slab opposite to the tribute-bearers, the same race, recognized by caps and boots, are fleeing on horseback, and yet turning round to fight the Assyrians, who are in chariots.

The same people are found on the black obelisk in the centre room of Assyrian relics. They have also the cap with the peak backwards, long fringed robes, and curious boots, with the toes turned up, like those of the men who are leading monkeys on the large tablet from the North-west Palace.



This is the Jewish costume which is so definitely presented to the eye, in every age of these sculptures, that we must *search the Scriptures* to see if any laws had been given for the general dress of the Chosen Nation; for that may impress a *meaning* on these peculiarities so constantly noticeable in the people whom the Assyrians have humbled and vanquished.

"The people shall dwell alone," said God, by the mouth of Balaam (Num. xxiii. 9). "Shall dwell in safety alone," says Moses (Deut. xxxiii. 28); and all the institutes of the great lawgiver tended to make them do so. Men are known by their externals; and their dress

was so arranged as to distinguish them from other people.

Fifteen hundred years after the Exodus, the historian Tacitus says of the Jews, "that they kept to their antiquated modes." If we inquire what these were, we shall find laws given to them about the *robe*, and the *beard;* and in the narrative of Daniel we have something relating to the *boots* and the *caps*. The prophet speaks of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, as cast into the burning fiery furnace "bound in their coats, their hosen, and their hats, and their other garments." We see the Assyrian king and his warriors in helmets, but never in hats or caps, or in boots, or "hosen."

The beards differ also. The Israelite was commanded "not to mar the corners of his beard;" the peak-pointed beard (not squared as the Assyrian's) distinguishes the conquered people, very often; and in other cases close black curls without a vestige of plaiting, equally mark the Jew. He was not to wear a garment of woollen and linen together (Deut. xxii. 11), and was to make fringes upon the four quarters of his vesture, and to put upon the fringe a riband of blue. The Lord in ordering this costume throughout their generations, said, "It shall be unto you for a fringe, that ye may look upon it, and remember all the commandments of the Lord, and do them;"* and the settlement of this mode of apparel it appears was intended to hinder them from seeking perpetual variety, and going "after their own heart and their own eyes." (Num. xv. 39.)

The Hebrews did not at all abhor the society of idolaters; they liked it, and practised their ways.

* M. Botta repeatedly notices at Khorsabad the inscriptions on the bottom of the dresses of the Hebrew prisoners in the cuneiform character.

"I know that after my death ye will utterly corrupt yourselves," says Moses, "and turn aside from the way, and evil will befall you in the latter days." (Deut. xxxi. 29.)

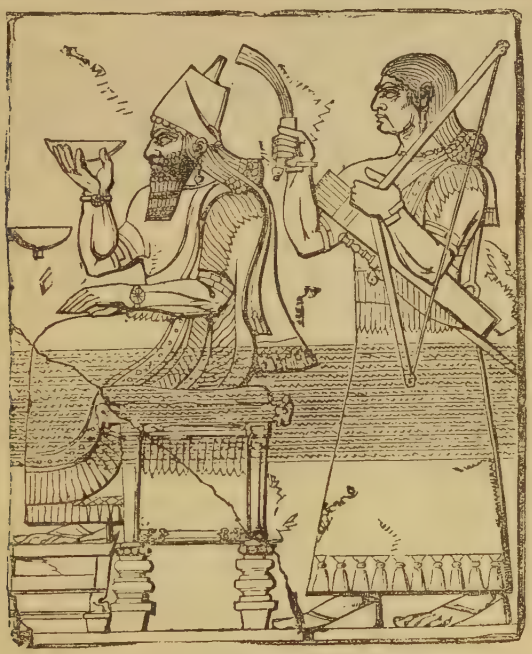
There is something very definite said about the dress of Christian *women* by the Apostle Peter, and by Timothy the beloved of St. Paul—what it *is* to be, and what it *is not* to be. They are to "adorn themselves in modest apparel with shamefacedness and sobriety," which certainly would not designate the apologies for bonnets of the present fashion, which seem to be specially arranged for *display* of "braided hair and gold (or its counterfeit) and pearls, and costly array of tinkling ornaments," and "head bands," and round tires like the moon, exactly similar to Isaiah's picture (see chap. iii. 16), which "the Lord would take away."

The Christian women and the Christian workers in our congregations ought surely to set their faces against these increasing vanities, and have a modest style of their own, which would be far more becoming and far more consistent for those who are "zealous of good works."

We have to come again to the lesson in the New Testament of old times, and not to be ashamed of that separateness from the world which God has appointed for the sons and daughters of Zion. It is not for them to imitate the "woman arrayed in purple and scarlet, decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations" (Rev. xvii.), and even She does not so array the women She sets apart for the service of her Church.

Here is a warlike king of ancient Nineveh, seated on his throne. A eunuch stands behind him, with bow and quiver, and in one hand holds a fly-flapper over the royal head. The king is seated,

and has a cup in his hand, from which he is supposed to be divining—therefore a "cup of abomination to the Lord. The throne on which he sits is orna-



KING OF THE NORTH-WEST PALACE.

mented with rams' heads. In the glass case opposite this sculpture, in the Nimroud side gallery, may still be observed, as found by Mr. Layard among the earth and rubbish in this palace, *the throne itself* re-constructed from many fragments, "earth's oldest throne," or one of its oldest, for the sculptures on these slabs portray, as must be allowed, an age or ages previous to their own. *These were evidently not the first sculptures*, though the first in our possession. All this magnificence in dress, the fringes and the tassels, the bracelets,

and the plaiting of the hair and beard, and the royal state, and the trapping of the horses, imply great luxury and civilization, as regards the ornamental arts. The early Ninevites and Babylonians, bent on carrying away captive other nations, had paid much and long attention to their own adornment. They were no rude savages, though they were cruel conquerors in the times of Israel's Judges. They had spent their minds upon the flesh and all its luxuries.

The early Assyrians clothed their horses in embroidered housings, and decorated them with plumes, tassels, and chains. And in the twelfth century B.C. the kings of Midian slain by Gideon are spoken of as having prple raiment, besides collars, or sweet jewels (see margin, Judges viii. 21 and 26), and chains and ornaments like the moon on their camels' necks. Ezekiel says (ch. xxvii. 20) that "Dedan was the merchant of Tyre in precious clothes for chariots," in the after history of the kingdom.

THE ASSYRIAN CHARIOTS.

Much is said about chariots in the Bible, and these in the Nineveh sculptures are evidently the chariots intended. The Canaanites of Palestine were able to resist the Israelites so successfully (unless Divine power drove them out) because of their chariots of iron. Jabin, King of Canaan, had 900 chariots. (Judges iv. 3.)

The prophets frequently allude to chariots as typical of power. King David says (Ps. xx. 7) :—

"Some trust in chariots, and some in horses, but we will remember the name of the Lord our God."

These are the war-chariots carrying archers, just as

spoken of in our Scriptures (Isa. v. 28), "raging in battle." "Rage ye chariots!" (Jer. xlvi. 9.) The prophet Nahum speaks of Nineveh in Sennacherib's latter day as—

"A city of blood, all full of lies and robbery; . . . and of the noise of the rattling of wheels and of the prancing horses, and of the jumping chariots." (Nahum iii. 1, 2.)

And God says (by Nahum ii. 13), that He

"Will burn her chariots in the smoke."

As He most assuredly did in thousands, while He left to us these few stone likenesses of them. You see it is necessary to study the Book of Judges before you can understand the value of the relics in our Nineveh galleries.

The figure of a king of Nineveh stands as a frontispiece to this tract, and marks the early rise in Scripture history of the *first* of the prophet Daniel's heathen kingdoms called "beasts," and defined as Babylon, Persia, Greece, and Rome; for the first of these had now begun to arise in conjunction with Israel. You see the king has in his hand a sceptre or rod.

The King of Babylon is called by the Lord "His hammer," and the Assyrian His "rod" (Isa. x. 5). God has many figures for the Assyrians: the "cedar in Lebanon," whose root was by great waters; there was not "any tree in the garden of God like unto him in his beauty;" all the trees of Eden envied him." (See Ezek. xxxi. 8, 9.) Then we read that his branches are fallen, his boughs are broken, and—

"All the people of the earth are gone down from his shadow, and have left him." (Verse 12.)

If Israel, as a literal people, foreshadow God's

spiritual Israel, Babylon and Nineveh foreshadow the world-power which has always been in array against the Church of God. So with the other armies of the heathen. The league of Jabin, the King of Hazor, was like the marshalling of anti-Christian forces against the early Church in an after day. The horses and the chariots were signs of power and strength; the very much people as the sand of the sea-shore," were like the furious myriads who with clamorous outcries against Christ and His Church, made themselves heard in Rome in the words, "The Christians to the lions." The Book of Revelation tells us that this struggle will be more fierce than ever in the latter day.

"The power of this world," says the writer whose motto we have taken for this tract, "and its wisdom will again muster their forces against Jesus Christ and His people. There will be a godless rebellion of human intelligence against Divine Revelation." Some sounds of the conflict are already heard. The dust of the legions of Antichrist is already rising in the air. Spiritual Jabins are coming forth from the Hazors of their strength, and march at the head of an innumerable multitude against a Divine Joshua; but He will conquer, as of old time. In the old and ruined Colosseum of Rome the white cross still stands as a Christian trophy. After the final conflict is over, there shall be peace upon Israel.

It is thought by many that the Book of Judges was written by the prophet Samuel; but, whoever was the historian, his courage and truth are seen in the unflinching way in which he exposes the sins of the Hebrews, and declares their frequent ingratitude for the amazing love of God.

THE ARCH OF TITUS AT ROME.

"SAMUEL THE PROPHET."

No. XIII.

SAMUEL, "the asked or heard of God," was his mother's name for the temple child, who afterwards became the last of the JUDGES, the first of the regular succession of PROPHETS,* and the founder of the Hebrew monarchy.

No character so great had arisen in Israel since the days of Moses, and God Himself by the mouth of Jeremiah links them together. (Jer. xv. 1.)

"Then said the Lord unto me, Though Moses and Samuel stood before me, yet my mind could not be towards this people. Cast them out of my sight, and let them go forth."

You would perhaps naturally suppose that Samuel wrote the books of the Old Testament that are called by his name. They formed one original book or roll, and were not divided into two, in the manuscript copies of the Hebrew Scriptures; but in the Greek Septuagint or first *translation* of the holy books, they are called the first and second "books of the kingdom." The Hebrews considered they had three rather than six books of the history of the kings of Israel and Judah, but they were each afterwards divided for convenience into 1st and 2nd Samuel; 1st and 2nd of Kings; and 1st and 2nd of Chronicles.

The first twenty-four chapters of the first book of Samuel *may* probably have been written by Samuel

* "All the prophets," says Peter, Acts iii. 24, "from Samuel and those that follow after."

himself, and the rest by the prophets Gad and Nathan, who continued the history of their own times, but whose names are not given to any books of Scripture now thus known, as it seems they once were, for in 1 Chron. xxix. 29, it is said that—

"The acts of David the king, first and last, behold, they are written in the book of Samuel the seer, and in the book of Nathan the prophet, and in the book of Gad the seer."

The *Hebrew* word here used for "*seer*," signifying "*one who sees*," is used but ten times in the Bible, and in seven of these it is applied to Samuel. There is a time when he first rises to our recollection as the little child in the linen ephod, and in the little mantle his mother brought him—as the child Samuel sleeping in the tabernacle at Shiloh, to whom the Lord "*revealed* Himself." That expression literally means, "The Lord uncovered his ear," as if the person who confides a secret should move away the long hair of his friend to whisper what none else may hear;" and this inner voice of God gave miraculous insight into the secrets of heaven and the future. Samuel was called of God to be the first of that long line of prophets, whose lives and sayings run *side by side* with the Jewish monarchy from the first to the last king, Samuel being the first, and Malachi the last of the line.

The prophets were messengers sent of God, whom He inspired to declare His will to the one chosen nation of Israel, and they foretold events long before they came to pass. Enoch, Noah, Jacob and Moses, had delivered many prophecies, which are included in their individual histories.

The inspiration that came upon the prophets was a wonderful thing; the men to whom it was vouchsafed felt it to be a power that they could not withstand. It took possession of them, filled them,

excited them, bore them along, enabled them to speak words which they could not have uttered at any other time. "The Spirit of God," it is said, was upon them, and their spirits felt like a vessel impelled before the wind. This was the inspiration vouchsafed to the higher class of prophets, as Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel, and *also* to those who in Scripture are called the *minor* or *lesser* prophets, because the prophecies they uttered were *short*, though as important. The Scribes wrote all these shorter prophecies together on one roll, lest any of them should be lost.

This inspiration from on high was not denied to women, who seem to have accompanied it with music and song. Let us listen to Hannah chanting in the tabernacle of Shiloh. Hannah ("the mother of Samuel," as women are still spoken of in the East) sings a *Gospel* song, inspired by the spirit of prophecy in the times of the Levitical law. (1 Sam. ii. 1—10.) You should read by its side the song of Sarah on the birth of Isaac (Gen. xxi. 6, 7), and the *Magnificat* of the Virgin Mary, as the mother of Christ (Luke i. 46). There had been a song of Miriam, "the prophetess," after passing the Red Sea (Exodus xv. 20), and a song of Deborah, the prophetess, praising the Lord for His deliverance by women, and it was given to women to sing all these songs, which foreshadowed the victories of the promised seed of the woman.

Some have thought that Hannah's song is too grand for the birth of Samuel, but the grandeur of *sacred* poetry consists in that it often merges the individual in the nation; it is an utterance of the Holy Ghost, and looks forward to all mankind. Hannah's song has been called a link between the song of Moses (Deut. xxxii.) and the song of David (2 Sam. xxii).

The ancient Hebrew Church considered Hannah's song a prophecy of Christ. She is the first person in Scripture who uses the words "His anointed," or who invokes Jehovah as the "Lord of hosts." David, God's chosen king, was to be anointed by her son Samuel, but before that, her son would also see God's own ark, the symbol of His Presence, which had led Israel to victory for 400 years, taken captive by the Philistines, and transported from Shiloh to Ashdod, to be placed in the temple of Dagon. Yet this was only to shew that before Him Dagon must fall prostrate, and that He would cause the Philistines themselves to return it to Israel; but when they did so Shiloh was pillaged and its sanctity had passed away, for the tabernacle—the last relic of the wilderness life—was gone, and the institution of the priesthood lay desolate; the predictions were fulfilled which God had caused the child-prophet to utter to Eli, and had been so manifestly fulfilled "that all Israel knew, from Dan to Beersheba, from north to south, that Samuel was established to be a prophet of the Lord." (1 Sam. iv. 20.) This account of him may perhaps be an addition by one of the after Scribes.

In the Old Testament there are clear, strong, vivid, examples given, of the character of king, priest, and prophet. Samuel obeyed the call of God to act in both the latter capacities, and he anointed kings. The prophet was not an antagonist to the priest, but he was often raised up to supply the lack of service in the priesthood. The prophet directed the actions of the king, and warned him from his wanderings in times of national confusion and error; and prophet, priest and king, each imperfectly foreshadowed Christ, who in Himself alone, perfectly united the three offices thus dimly outlined a thousand years before.

In all God's government arranged for Israel, everything stood on the base of their religion, their duty towards Himself. Their ruler was GOD, and all their magistrates, judges, kings and prophets, were HIS ministers. We have seen them come up out of Egypt, scarcely then to be called a nation, but a body of tribes, each tribe having its princes and its heads; and these still subsisted in the Promised Land. God and His TABERNACLE were the centre of all their history, whether in the time of "Moses, His servant," or of Joshua, Moses's minister, or of the Judges who followed Joshua. The Tabernacle was the place where man met with God. When pitched at Shiloh, the site which HE had chosen for it (Joshua ix. 22; xviii. 1) in the centre of the land, it continued to be the gathering point of the heads of the tribes, during the whole period of the judges, for councils of peace or war (see Joshua xxii., Judges xxi.), and for annual solemn dances, in which the women of Shiloh were conspicuous. Afterwards corruption crept into these mixed assemblies, and the tabernacle of the congregation was profaned by its own priesthood; a divided worship was paid at other altars, and ere long the ark of God was taken by the Philistines, and upon the very sanctuary was written,

"Ichabod"—"The glory hath departed." (1 Sam. iv. 22.)

"For they provoked him to anger with their high places, and moved him to jealousy with their graven images. When God heard this, he was wroth, and greatly abhorred Israel: So that he forsook the tabernacle of Shiloh, the tent which he placed among men." (Psalm lxxvii.)

After this the Tabernacle did not perish, but it never recovered its glory. Even Samuel, who had been brought up within its precints, treats it as an

abandoned shrine, and sacrifices to the Lord elsewhere. He sacrifices, though only a Levite and not a priest, at Mizpeh, (1 Sam. vii. 9), at Ramah, (ix. 12), at Gilgal, (x. 8.) The tabernacle probably became again a moveable sanctuary, for under King Saul it seems for a while to have been settled at Nob. (1 Sam. xxi. 1—5.) Here the priests were massacred, and hence Abiathar the high priest fled; and the oracle of God by the ephod—the answer by Urim and Thummim, was known no more after Abiathar's time. He answered David by the ephod once in this way, after his flight from Nob (1 Sam. xxiii. 9), probably also again in 2 Samuel xxi. 1, but now the word of the Lord was to be uttered by the voice of the Prophets, instead of the Urim and Thummim.

Do you want to know what was meant by these words? No one now can *certainly* tell, but their literal sense is "Lights" and "Perfections," and the Jews must have been aware what they meant up to the time of Solomon. By Exod. xxviii. 15—30, we learn that the Urim and Thummim were placed *within* the breastplate of judgment worn by the high priest, which, with wreathen chains of gold, was attached to the shoulder-pieces of his ephod.

The breastplate was of cunning work, gold, blue, purple, and scarlet, mingled with fine twined linen in its "foursquare" construction, and upon this groundwork of gorgeous colour were "filled in" glittering jewels, in four rows—ruby, topaz, and carbuncle; emerald, sapphire, and diamond; opal, agate, and amethyst; beryl, onyx, and jasper; each gem set in ouches or clasps of gold, and graven with the name of one of the twelve tribes of Israel. There is especial mention made of the *inner* side of

the breastplate, and on this inner side were to be placed the Urim and the Thummim.

The breastplate passed from Aaron to Eleazar and his son, and the Urim and Thummim with it.

Moses mentions them as the crowning glory of the tribe of Levi (Deut. xxxiii. 8, 9). Such inquiries as the following seem to have been made of the Lord, and answered doubtless by these means, always in conjunction with a priest and an ephod. According to the Urim the children of Israel were to go out or come in. (Num. xxvii. 21.)

"Who shall go up for us against the Canaanites first?" (Judges i. 1.)

"Which of us shall go up first to the battle against the children of Benjamin?" (Judges xx. 18.)

"Shall I go and smite those Philistines?" (1 Sam. xxiii. 2.)

"Will the men of Keilah deliver me into the hand of Saul?" (1 Sam. xxiii. 12.)

The answer is in all cases very brief, and amounts to little more than an affirmative, or a negative, and one question only is answered at a time.

Never after the days of David is the ephod with its precious breast-plate connected with counsel from Jehovah.

The nation on their return from the captivity desired a priest with the Urim and the Thummim, but he was no more found. No relic of the ark or its golden cherubim remain, and none from Solomon's Temple were preserved to tempt Christ's followers to idolatry. If they had been, in these days of fresh reverence for the external and the sensuous, who can tell but they might have been worshipped like the crucifix of Rome?

It seems most probable that the light from the Urim and the Thummim within the breast-plate (whatever they were) shone visibly to those without

through the precious stones, which were probably *set clear*—so the light and love of Jesus in the heart will be evident, especially to brethren in Christ, the "household of faith," who know for themselves the Divine source of such illumination.

But to return from the ephod to the tabernacle.

All things in the Tabernacle had spoken of Christ —in symbol—in symbol to Israel—in vivid types to *us*, for we can look back upon the Old Testament by the light of the New. A symbol was a sign, which might refer to past, present, or future; a type was always prefigurative. God ordered symbolic actions in the prophets. Jeremiah's breaking a potter's vessel (Jer. xviii. 2, 10), and his hiding a girdle in a rock on the banks of the Euphrates, which when looked for proved to be rotten, signified destruction shortly to befall the abandoned Jewish people (Jer. xiii. 1—7). The building of the temple was a symbolic prophecy prefiguring the incarnation of God in the person of Christ, and of the raising up in Him of a spiritual house that should be an "habitation of God through the Spirit." (Ephes. ii. 20—22.)

The old Tabernacle of the wilderness is spoken of in the first book of Samuel, as the "house," or the "temple" of Jehovah, and, indeed, the Temple of Solomon was neither more nor less than the exact repetition of the pattern "which God showed to Moses in the mount," only it was erected of more durable materials, and was just double the size of the holy tent in the wilderness; therefore a knowledge of the meaning of the symbols in the one structure is necessary to understand the other.

The outer court of the tabernacle was formed by pillars of brass, with capitals of silver, five cubits or seven feet seven inches high, and the same distance

apart, to which were attached, by hooks of silver, white curtains, it is supposed of network, so as to permit the tribes around to witness the proceedings within. These curtains enclosed a space which was a double square twenty-five yards broad and fifty yards long. The entrance on the eastern side was fifty cubits or twelve and a half yards wide, through curtains wrought with needlework of gorgeous colours, blue, purple and scarlet, on a white ground—all which also spake in symbol to the Israelite. The *white* was to cause him to think of God's holiness and purity fencing and surrounding His house; the *blue* lifted his eyes to the sapphire sky, God's throne; and the blue riband prescribed for the hem of his own garment reminded him that he was God's servant while upon earth; the *purple* was the colour of kings, and spoke to him of the presence of a Royal Master; while the *scarlet* (blood-colour) told him that *that* holy and heavenly and royal Presence could only be approached by an offering of the shed blood—the blood of the Lamb "slain from the foundation of the world."

The lamb which was to be offered as a burnt-offering for the sins of the people, every morning and every evening, on the brazen altar, was the first object that struck the eye on entering the outer court of the Tabernacle. On this altar was always burning the fire which had been kindled by a flash from the Schechinah, or Presence within the Vail; it "came out from before the Lord" (Levit. ix. 24), and this fire was never to go out. This altar spoke to the Hebrews of pardon for sin through perpetual sacrifice.

The second object in the outer court was the laver of brass, at which the priests were to wash their hands and their feet. The altar was the place of

pardon and justification through the blood of Christ, the laver of purification was the sign of sanctification through the Spirit.

Then, on entering the Tabernacle itself, which only the priests might do, there were again symbols of the same things. The little table of shewbread, with twelve loaves upon it, one for each tribe, to be renewed every seventh day, and a double one on the Sabbath, prefigured the Saviour who declared that He was the bread of life, which bread He broke for His disciples in symbol of His body broken on the accursed tree. The place of worship was to be the place of spiritual food and light, and communion with God, as it should be to this day.

The interior of the Tabernacle was dark, but for the light of the seven-branched golden candlestick, signifying the illumination of the Holy Ghost. The form of this sacred candlestick is preserved to us to this day on the arch of Titus, the Roman conqueror, who destroyed Jerusalem for the last time seventy years after Christ, and sculptured the trophies of its holy things on the triumphal arch which was to endure to *his* pagan glory *even to this present day.* You have in the frontispiece a fine wood-cut, made from a noble photograph of this treasure of treasures among the relics of antiquity.

Rome shows on this tablet that in the first Christian century she held in pawn, as it were, the holy things of God, as a heathen power. Where she hid the originals none can tell. The precious candlestick revealed not to *her* the glorious meaning of the table of shewbread, or of the golden altar of incense, ascending before the vail of the Temple, and which signified the place of communion with the unseen and invisible. We might think that the Book of Leviticus contained nothing for *us,* till the Book of

Hebrews points us back to the consideration of all these symbols, or figures, and what they signify. See the whole *ninth* and *tenth* chapters of Hebrews, and then turn to the sixteenth of Leviticus, and watch the offering of the Scapegoat.

Two goats are taken by the priest, both alike in age and beauty, and lots are cast upon them. One is sacrificed; upon the other Aaron lays his hands, and makes over it a confession of the sins of the people, and then sends it far into the wilderness. Christ is typified by both these goats. They signify two acts of Christ. I. His sacrifice of Himself for the sins of the people. II. His bearing away our sin into a land not inhabited by us, even into heaven, whither He ascended, and is looked upon by God as bearing our sin. The Hebrew name for the scape-goat is Azazel, which means "the bearer off, the carrier away." The whole figure represents not only the dying of Christ for our sins, but His rising again: "He rose again for our justification." A single goat could not have represented both ideas; the disappearance of the goat is the type of the blotting-out of our sins, which God will remember no more. When He forgives He forgets. *We* cannot do this. We sometimes forgive, and yet remember; but God blots out, and for ever.

Aaron was to take the blood of the first goat that he killed, before the dismissal of the second, and bring it within the vail, and sprinkle it on the mercy-seat and before the mercy-seat, and also upon the horns of the brazen altar. There was to be no man in the Tabernacle while he did it; but the Awful Presence of the Lord would be there; and he was to take a censer full of burning coals from off the golden altar of incense before the Lord, and to sprinkle the incense on the fire, that the cloud of

the incense might rise up and cover the mercy-seat of the ark of the testimony, as it is said, "that he die not." He waved the censer that the clouds of incense might be as a vail before that exceeding brightness, which would otherwise glare him into blindness, and then he sprinkled the blood on the mercy-seat, and *seven* times on the floor—and when God saw the blood, as in Egypt, He passed over the sin of priest and people.

This was done on the great Day of Atonement, the tenth day of the seventeenth sacred month, Tisri, between the Feast of Trumpets and of Tabernacles.

The Commands of Leviticus, you will remember, were delivered at Sinai in the beginning of the second year of the wanderings, when it was supposable that the Israelites would be obedient, and march directly for Canaan; but they rebelled at Kadesh Barnea, and were condemned to wander for thirty-eight years in the wilderness. For all these years they were under a ban—out of favour with God—and that generation all died in the wilderness. They could not even fulfil the requirements of the Levitical law. It was not intended for a rebel people in the desert, but for an obedient people in Canaan. When they passed into the land with Joshua, the Levitical law awoke with the resurrection of the people, and to the devout Israelite must have suggested many meanings beneath the surface of its letter. But it has been well observed "that the hieroglyphics of the Levitical law could never have been fully intelligible till the Holy Spirit deciphered them. In the first days of the Gospel the literal requirements of the Law were fulfilled and done away with in Christ. They fell off like the husks of swelling seed, or the blossoms of

setting fruit; but their spiritual meaning is still fruitful for ever."

But to return to Samuel. He was an intercessor with God.

"Moses and Aaron among his priests, and Samuel among them that call upon his name; they called upon the Lord, and he answered them."

This is the way that King David remembers Samuel, in the ninety-ninth Psalm, and Samuel himself says to the people, "God forbid that I should sin in ceasing to pray for you." (1 Sam. xii. 23.)

We must now look for the scope and general meaning of the First Book of Samuel, so called. At the end of the first twenty-four chapters, which chiefly consist of biographies of Samuel, Saul, and David, the twenty-fifth chapter begins with the announcement:—

"And Samuel died, and all the Israelites were gathered together, and lamented him, and buried him in his house at Ramah."

The main design of the first book seems to be to continue the history of the Israelites under the last two judges, Eli and Samuel, and then to introduce the choice of the people in King Saul, and to show the cause why the form of government was changed into a monarchy.

Before Moses bade farewell to the Hebrews in the wilderness, he had foreseen that they would desire a king at some future day, and had thus provided that he should be an enlightened king.

When he sat upon his throne, he was to write him a copy of the law in a book, out of that which is before the priests, the Levites. He was to do this for himself, and he was to read in it all the days of

his life (Deut. xvii. 18, 19), which many proofs in the Psalms assure us that David continually did.

The life of David occupies *sixteen* chapters of the First Book of Samuel, beginning at the sixteenth chapter, and the whole *twenty-four* chapters of the second Book, besides *two* chapters of the first of Kings, and *nineteen* chapters of the first of Chronicles. If Samuel was his biographer up to the twenty-fourth chapter of this first book, and the time of his own death, his part of the story chiefly dealt with David's early prowess, and his wanderings and sufferings under the jealousy of Saul.

After reading his conquest of Goliath, in chapter the seventeenth, let us turn to Psalm ix., where he praises God for his triumph, and after the story of Jonathan's advising him to flee from his cruel father, Psalm xi., where David confides in God. In Psalm lvi,, he complains of his persecutors; in Psalm lix., he prays for deliverance; Psalm cxlii. is his prayer in the cave of Adullam.

In 1 Samuel xxii. there is an account of Doeg's treachery; and the Doeg Psalms, as they are called, depicting David's state of mind in those circumstances, are the 17th, 35th, 52nd, 64th, 109th, 120th, and 140th Psalms, and we may then follow him into the wilderness of Ziph, in the 23rd chapter of 1 Samuel, and in his own Psalms, 31st, 57th, 58th, and 63rd. Both of the books of Samuel are very important to the illustration of the Book of Psalms.

The First Book of Samuel begins and winds up the story of SAUL, of whom it has been said that *he* was "but a parenthesis in the counsel of God concerning Israel," like the Levitical law "added because of transgression." His beginnings were fair as long as he was little in his own eyes, but he soon

grew self-confident and vain-glorious. He fell away from being *God's* king as early as the second year of his reign, and the gift of the Spirit to him for that office was taken away and bestowed upon David. Saul had trifled with God's Word, and followed the law of his own will, and more of his life passed in pursuing after David, the Lord's servant, than in driving out the enemies of Israel. He was puffed up and rejected, and then deserted, and given up to the guidance of an evil spirit, and to envy and hatred of David, and even of Jonathan his son, so far nobler than himself.

A prey to desolation and despair, he resorted to Samuel when dead, to whom he would not listen while living, and thus filled up his cup of abomination with necromancy, which is in the sight of God so hateful. (Deut. xviii. 11.)

Saul's consultation with the witch of Endor opens a solemn question? Was this really the departed spirit of Samuel returned to the earth, or a Satanic spirit in his form? It is quite possible with God, for demons to appear to men by His permission, but it would be inconsistent with the style of Scripture that the Holy Spirit should use the name of Samuel throughout the story, while, at the same time, Satan was intended; and Dr. Hales says that the Hebrew words are *Samuel himself*, the latter word being omitted in the English.

Many students of Scripture are of opinion that God *really* permitted the spirit of Samuel to appear to the terror and surprise of the woman, and for the last warning of the wilful Saul. Yet we cannot for a moment suppose that Satan, or a witch, or any who hold forbidden intercourse with evil spirits, have any power over the spirits of the just made perfect, so as to cause them to leave their heavenly

rest to answer the questions of men upon earth. This was a solitary case in which God permitted such intercourse. Dr. Hales suggests that it may have been for three reasons:—I. To make this, Saul's last crime, the instrument of his punishment in the foretaste of his impending doom. II. To show to the heathen world that God could set His prophets even above the powers of darkness to their own terror. III. To confirm the belief in a future state by "one who rose from the dead," under the dispensation of Moses. How awful was the message conveyed, and how true. The next day followed Gilboa's slaughter of both father and son. David thus generously laments over his enemy, and his dear and noble friend Jonathan:—

"The beauty of Israel is slain upon the high places.
How are the mighty fallen!
Saul and Jonathan were lovely and pleasant in their lives,
And in their death they were not divided.
They were swifter than eagles;
They were stronger than lions.
How are the mighty fallen,
And the weapons of war perished!"

DAVID.

David reigned in Hebron seven and a half years. King, but at first, only over Judah, his power gradually increased, and at last the voice of the whole people called him to occupy the throne. His twenty-seventh Psalm, "The Lord is my light and my salvation," the Psalm "before the anointing," shows on whose arm he leaned in his rise from the sheepfold to the crown of all Israel, which he held for thirty-three years.

The second Book of Samuel details the reformation of the Jewish Church as established by David, records his many royal triumphs, then his sins

and his troubles, and finally, his restoration; and it is a most delightful task to follow out his history with his own poetic and inspired records in the Psalms. He is called the sweet Psalmist of Israel, and he tells us that the Spirit of the Lord spake by him. (2 Sam. xxiii. 1.)

It was doubtless by Divine authority that he appointed the singing of his Psalms by chosen and skilful persons in the solemn worship of the Tabernacle, which Solomon continued in the Temple, and which was re-established by Ezra after the Captivity. Thus the people became acquainted with the "songs of Zion," and were celebrated in surrounding countries for their melodious voices. Babylon required of them a song in her strange land.

There has been a wonderful communion of saints in the Psalms of David for 3,000 years. It is well to know to which to turn on particular occasions.

There are penitential Psalms.
vi., xxii., xxxviii., li., cii., cxxx.,

Psalms of dejection under afflictions.
xiii., lxxvii., lxxxviii., cxliii.

Psalms in which help is asked of God.
vii., xvii., xxvi., xxxv., lvi.

Psalms expressive of firm trust in God under affliction.
iii., xvi., xxvii. xxx., liv., lvii., lxi., lxii., lxxi.

Thanksgiving Psalms.
ix., xviii., xxx., xxxiv., xl., xlviii.

Prophetic Psalms.
xi., xvi., xxii., xl., xlv., lxviii., lxxii., lxxxvii., cxviii.

Historical Psalms.
lxxviii., cv., cvi.

Messianic Psalms.
ii., xxii., xlv., cx., cxviii.

You will find titles to many of the Psalms, which point you at once to the occasion on which they were written. "They contain the Hebrew history

set to music." Fifty of them are anonymous, and of the hundred that remain, Moses is the author of *one*—the 90th; King David of 73; King Solomon of two (Ps. lxxii., cxxvii.); Asaph of 12; the sons of Korah of 11; and Ethan of one (Ps. lxxxix.); all which were arranged in one volume or roll by Ezra the Scribe.

No fewer than ten of the Psalms,* either in their traditional titles or internal evidence, bear marks of having been composed for the high festival of the ark going up to Jerusalem, in the musical glories of which the poet-king, playing on stringed instruments, also personally shared.

The erection of Jerusalem into the new capital introduces us to a new era in David's life. He now became a king, on the scale of the great oriental sovereigns of Egypt and Assyria. "I have made thee a great name, like unto the name of the great men that are in the world," says the Lord, by Nathan the prophet. Within ten years from the capture of Jerusalem he had reduced to a state of permanent subjection the Philistines on the west, the Moabites on the east, the Syrians on the north-east, as far as the Euphrates, the Edomites on the south, and finally the Ammonites; and a general peace then followed, commemorated in the name of the peaceful Solomon, the son born to him at this crisis.

King David was a man of war; the Scripture outlines his character: "The son of Jesse the Bethlehemite, cunning in playing, a mighty valiant man, a man of war, and prudent in matters, and a comely person, and the Lord is with him." (1 Sam. xvi. 18.) This portrait formed his intro-

* xxix., xxx., xv., xlvi., ci., lxviii., xxiv., cxxxii., while parts of Psalm cv. and cvi. are given in 1 Chron. xvi., in the historical account of the heartfelt ceremony.

duction to the court of Saul. The Lord placed him at that point in the Hebrew history when the heathen nations were yet to be overcome, and many of David's psalms show the spirit in which he overcame them.

He was the man for his time. *So far from faultless* that we now derive our chief instruction, not from the history of his conquests and his splendour, but from his humble penitence after his recorded crimes. His passion and his tenderness, his generosity and his fierceness, stand out in bold light and shadow in the history of the world. Yet the Lord chose him and his. Even Christ is far less often called the son of Abraham, than the "Son of David." Most of David's sins, and the sorrows that grew out of them, sprang from the polygamy, with all its evil consequences, into which he had plunged on coming to the throne, thus forsaking the law for the king, so wisely given by Moses. But one thing he had always on his heart, to entreat the presence of the Lord in his city and his kingdom. In a day when he had assembled all the princes and captains of Israel—

"Then David the king stood up upon his feet, and said Hear me, my brethren, and my people: As for me, I had in mine heart to build an house of rest for the ark of the covenant of the Lord, and for the footstool of our God, and had made ready for the building.

"But God said unto me, Thou shalt not build an house for my name, because thou hast been a man of war, and hast shed blood.

"Howbeit the Lord God of Israel chose me before all the house of my father to be king over Israel for ever.

"And of all my sons (for the Lord hath given me many sons), he hath chosen Solomon my son to sit upon the throne of the kingdom of the Lord over Israel.

"And He said unto me, Solomon thy son, he shall build my house and my courts; for I have chosen him to be my son, and I will be his Father."

Among all the Psalms there is none that proves

how David loved and studied the Word of God so much as his longest psalm, the 119th—*the Bible Psalm*—in which every one of the 176 verses speaks with love and joy of this precious word.

Have you noticed that every verse, under the different names of testimonies, precepts, statutes, commandments, ordinances, judgments, law, refers to the Bible?—and David's Bible comprised only the five books of Moses, Job, Joshua, Judges, and Ruth, and the history of Israel by Samuel, to which he added so largely of his own psalms.

The whole Christian world, as well as the Jews, may thank God for their poet-king, with all his short comings and sins. It was seen in David as the German hymn says—that

> "The more the cross, the more the praying,
> The bruised plant yields sweetest balm;
> Man doth not seek to find the pole
> In quiet seas and steady calms,
> And how had *we* had David's psalms
> Had *he* not had a troubled soul?"

So David slept with his fathers, and was buried in the city of David. He lives in his undying and inspired songs, most precious in their prophecies of the kingdom of Christ; and to this day he makes himself a place in every Christian heart, a place nearest and dearest in our darkest hours of sorrow and tribulation.

The Psalms are quoted about seventy times in the New Testament. The Spirit of Christ had spoken in David; and He Himself explained to His disciples the meaning of what had been spoken of Him in the Psalms. (See Luke xxiv. 44, 45.)

"These are the words which I spake unto you while I was yet with you; that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the law of Moses, and in the Prophets, and in the Psalms, concerning me. Then opened he their understanding that they might understand the scriptures."

TOMB OF DANIEL AT SUSA.

THE TIMES OF THE KINGS AND THE PROPHETS.

No. XIV.

We are come now to the books of Kings and Chronicles, and we cannot fail to see how *they* belong to the books of Samuel, which come before them, for the first and second chapters of Kings are needed to close the life and reign of David; nineteen chapters too of the first book of Chronicles, are taken up by David's story, *told over again* in the aforesaid annals of his nation.

David's life, indeed, takes up no less than sixty-one chapters of the three different books of Samuel, Kings, and Chronicles. His son Solomon's life, with all his "glory," is allowed much shorter space, it only occupies twenty chapters, viz., the *first eleven* of 1st Kings, and the *first nine* of 2nd Chronicles.

The first book of Chronicles is filled by genealogies, and by the life of David. The other sixty-three chapters of the first and second of Kings, and of the second book of Chronicles, comprise the history of the *divided* kingdoms of Judah and Israel.

Of Judah there are twenty kings, and of Israel nineteen kings, and their reigns include the times of *all* the Prophets whose names are given to books of the Bible; so that the books of Kings and Chronicles, with the books of Ezra, Nehemiah, and Esther, which follow them, present the great

platform of Jewish history (occupying about 530 years), on which all the Prophets moved and spake, although their books seem to *come* after the Kings in the Bible.

We shall offer you a Table, which will make this clear to you, and then take up each Prophet in his turn, and consider his times, but you cannot at all understand the Prophets unless you remember the king and his times under whom each lived, and how these kings succeeded each other.

It is astonishing how those who have received Christ, and love the NEW Testament, should think it of so little consequence to climb the ladder of the OLD Testament history which led up to *Him*. Every child brought up in a Christian family, or taught in a Christian school, ought to be able to count the "rounds" of that ladder as easily as they can say their alphabet, yet how very few of us are thus able. If our young people, even in the educated classes, had been thus informed, and had daily studied the histories inspired by the Spirit of God, with half the zest to which they can turn to those of heathen nations called "beasts," in the prophet Daniel (but which we call "classics," and make the foundation of our modern literature); if they were as versed in Bible lore as they are in Greek and Latin (the languages of old Greece and Rome), they would perhaps have had better morals in these days, and would have been harassed by fewer doubts. The school of Colenso is best fitted for those who are ignorant of Scripture *in its connection*, and who are not "well furnished" to meet its clever but baseless cavils at the *Story* which God Himself has vouchsafed to tell to man.

We have tried to trace this story step by step; we have seen how Genesis prepared the way for

Exodus, Exodus for Leviticus, Leviticus for Numbers, Numbers for Deuteronomy. Then these five books of Moses were necessary for the understanding of Joshua, Joshua for Judges and Ruth, Judges and Ruth for the Books of Samuel, which begins the history of the kings and the prophets, and describe the occasions of many of David's Psalms. We have now in the first book of Kings to observe how the reign of David flows into that of Solomon, and how distinctly, though of course in a human and earthly manner, they each prefigured Christ. David, as the conqueror of Jerusalem, and purchaser of the site of the Temple, and provider of treasures for it; Solomon, who is called the Prince of Peace, the wise Judge and King, the builder of the Temple—each after all is but a faint shadow of the King of kings, and Lord of lords, "the Lord of hosts," and the "Prince of peace;" He who had prepared for the building of His spiritual temple in the beginning by the lives and utterances of patriarchs and prophets, and has carried it on even through all their mistakes and sins, and those of priests and kings; and who has completed the work by evangelists and apostles, whom He filled with the Spirit sent down from heaven, they also not being perfect, but made perfect in Christ Jesus.

To these it was given to prepare for us the records which they were inspired to write; and still, ever since, has the same Heavenly King been polishing the corner-stones for His palace above, "making them ready in many a quarry before they are brought thither," as Solomon did the stones of *his* temple (1 Kings vi. 7), "so that there was neither hammer nor axe nor any tool of iron heard in the house of the Lord while it was building."

Every living stone in God's spiritual temple has been, and will be to the end of all Church history, "built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner-stone; in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: in whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit."

But now let us fix our thoughts on the life of Solomon as recorded in the books of Kings and Chronicles. His acts seem to have been formerly contained in "books" referred to as those of Nathan the prophet and Iddo the seer (see 2 Chron. ix. 29); and a "Book of the Acts of Solomon," spoken of in 1 Kings xi. 41, may have supplied many details which have come down to us in the summing-up of the Books of Chronicles, which tell us that "King Solomon passed all the kings of the earth in riches and wisdom. And all the kings of the earth sought the presence of Solomon, to hear his wisdom, that God had put into his heart."

Under the influences of Bathsheba, David, and Nathan, the royal child had grown up. At the age of ten or eleven he must have passed through the revolt of Absalom and shared his father's exile. He would have been taught all that priests or Levites or prophets had to teach—music and song, and the "Book of the Law of the Lord" in such portions as were then written. In the course of years he emulated his father's Psalms: the 2nd, 45th, 72nd, 127th, are on good grounds referred to his time. Science and art, music and poetry, had in this age received a new impulse.

The young sovereign at the age of nineteen or twenty came to the throne. Born to the purple, his soul cradled in grand liturgies, he had been

trained to think unceasingly of the surpassing palace of Jehovah, of which he was to be the builder.

Never before, and never after, did the kingdom of Israel take such a place among the great monarchies of the East—able to ally itself or to contend on equal terms with Egypt and Assyria, and stretching from the river Euphrates to the borders of Egypt.

Alas ! the very first act of the foreign policy of Solomon's reign was to make affinity with Egypt. He married Pharaoh's daughter. (1 Kings iii. 1.) Since the time of the Exodus there had been no intercourse between the two countries; and Solomon's marriage is thought to have been a political movement. The immediate results were perhaps favourable enough. The new queen brought with her as a dowry the frontier city of Gezer. Gifts from the nobles of Israel and of Tyre were lavished at her feet, and a separate and stately palace was built for her ere long outside of the city of David, where she dwelt with "the virgins her fellows," probably conforming partially to the religion of her adopted country.

Solomon was a merchant-king. His alliance with the Phœnicians or Tyrians was only the continuance of that of his father David; for Israel was to be supplied from Tyre with the materials for the Temple.

The Jews now joined the Tyrians in their voyages of commerce, and Solomon's wide possessions opened a new world for that barter between nations. The new ships were manned by Phœnicians, but built at Solomon's expense. They sailed down the Red Sea to the Indian Ocean, to the Ophir either of Arabia or India, and to Sheba, the land of the sons of Joktan; and after three years' absence brought

back gold and silver, precious stones and woods, spices and ivory, and new forms of animal life—"apes and peacocks." We are told that Solomon himself travelled to Ezion-geber, perhaps to see this fleet set sail (2 Chron. viii. 17); and thus may have been caused the thoughts which appear in the Psalms on the wonders of the great deep, and on doing business in great waters. (Ps. cvii. 23—30.)

This, however, was but one branch of the traffic organized by Solomon; for to him was owing the foundation of cities like Tadmor in the wilderness, and others on the route to the Euphrates, which had each its own special market for chariot-horses and stores; while the erection of towns on the Lebanon points to a still more distant commerce, which developed the resources of Central Asia.

"And God gave Solomon wisdom and understanding exceeding much: and Solomon's wisdom excelled the wisdom of all the children of the east country, the Arabians and Indians, and all the wisdom of Egypt: and he spake three thousand proverbs, and his songs were a thousand and five."

What has become of these proverbs and songs of the wisest of men? Such of them as were the utterance of the Holy Spirit to his soul, doubtless stand recorded in the Book of Proverbs as we have it, and in the "Song of Songs," which is Solomon's; and many more may be still bearing fruit in the wise sayings of the sages of the East, and even in the Apocryphal Books of "the son of Sirach" (Ecclesiasticus), and "The Wisdom of Solomon"—which, though not counted inspired, contain much that is to be remembered with profit.

The men of Judah watched for seven long years the rise of the Cyclopean foundations of vast stones which yet remain when all beside has perished. These gradually rose up and covered the area of

the threshing-floor of Araunah, till at last, "like some tall palm the massive fabric grew" to its perfection, and the day arrived when the ark from Zion was to be brought to its new home; and as it was solemnly placed in its golden sanctuary, the cloud—"the glory of the Lord," "the Presence"—as in the Tabernacle, filled the house of the Lord; the two tables of stone within it, the manna, and Aaron's rod that budded, being the links that connected the wilderness life of the people with this their "Solomon's glory."

Alas! that a sovereign so honoured and even taught of God, departed afterwards from the shadow of His wings—*did not dwell in* "THE PRESENCE." There fell on him, as on other crowned voluptuaries, the weariness that seemed written upon all things, and which has impressed on the world for ever—

"Vanity of vanities; all is vanity."

Ecclesiastes is the last of the three books that remain to tell the history of his mind; and the confessions of "The Preacher" are often used of the Holy Ghost to draw souls from things earthly to things heavenly; for Solomon above all men had been allowed to try all forms of earthly good, and to pronounce all alike unsatisfying. He had not gained this wide experience *unharmed:* "the world, the flesh, and the devil," prepared deep trouble for Solomon; his deep declension shaded the brightness of what was really his testimony for God, and showed the weakness of all flesh when depending on its own strength.

Solomon, like David, had great influence over Tyre, "the city on the rock in the midst of the sea," which Josephus says had been founded 230 years before Solomon's Temple. Hiram was the

great friend and helper of Solomon, and through each other their influence spread over the whole known world.

Tyre, when she afterwards apostatized, is reminded by Ezekiel of religious privileges that seem to have rivalled those of Judah.

"Son of man, say unto the prince of Tyrus, Thus saith the Lord God: Because thine heart is lifted up, and thou hast said, I am a God, I sit in the seat of God, in the midst of the seas; yet thou art a man, and not God, though thou set thine heart as the heart of God.

"Behold, thou art wiser than Daniel; there is no secret that they can hide from thee:

"With thy wisdom and with thine understanding thou hast gotten thee riches, and hast gotten gold and silver into thy treasures:

"By thy great wisdom and by thy traffick hast thou increased thy riches, and thine heart is lifted up because of thy riches:

"Therefore thus saith the Lord God; Behold, I will bring strangers upon thee, the terrible of the nations: and they shall draw their swords against the beauty of thy wisdom, and they shall defile thy brightness."

The 26th, 27th, and 28th of Ezekiel show how much the Tyrians must have derived from companionship with Israel. The words of the preacher, the King of Jerusalem, seem to have circulated through all lands; and yet the Queen of Sheba owns that she had heard nothing that came into comparison with the impression of her personal interviews. The commercial influence of the Great King doubtless did more than secure ivory, apes, and peacocks. In his age, *about a thousand years* before the Christian era, when the Greeks had not learned their letters, and the Romans had no existence, the Jews and Tyrians were probably in many silent ways the world's missionaries and instructors, although they had not learned of Christ to go and teach all nations, and would possibly have deemed it unworthy of their exclusive rights to do so.

Although Solomon had a thousand wives, we hear but of one son, Rehoboam, whose mother was an Ammonitess. The history of his seventeen years' reign is contained at its greatest length in 2 Chron. x., xi., xii., but nothing is said of him during his father's lifetime. He must have been forty-one years of age when he came to the throne, and there is a bitter expression of Solomon's feelings in Eccles. ii. 18, which may probably have referred to him.

"I hated all my labour which I had taken under the sun: because I should leave it unto the man that shall be after me."

He must have been trained in the lap of luxury, and his character appears to have been, at least on his accession, light and headstrong; one on which his father's wisdom was thrown away. He went to the old sanctuary at Schechem to be crowned king of all Israel, all Israel having come to their ancient capital to make him king, and here Jeroboam, an appointed rival whom even Solomon had feared and sought to kill, being sent for from Egypt by all the congregation, returned from his exile, and spoke to Rehoboam in the name of the ten tribes, saying—

"Thy father made our yoke grievous: now therefore make thou his heavy yoke which he put upon us, lighter, and we will serve thee." (1 Kings xii. 4.)

Rehoboam asked three days to consider, and he took counsel with old men and young men of his father's court, but it appears took no counsel of God; and then he gave the ungracious answer as the young men, who had grown up with him, advised him,

"My father made your yoke heavy, but I will add to your yoke; he chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with scorpions."*

* The Rabbis translate this "knotted whips with points."

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE OF THE KINGS

THREE KINGS OF ALL ISRAEL:—Reigned 40 years: Saul 1095 B.C.

PROPHETS OF JUDAH	Reigned Years	20 KINGS OF JUDAH.	Years B.C.	19 KINGS OF ISRAEL.
Shemaiah	17	Rehoboam	975	Jeroboam ... ...
	3	Abijam, *or Abijah* ...	958	
Oded	41	Asa	955	
Azariah	—		954	Nadab ... ...
Hanani	—		953	Baasha ... ...
Jehu, *son of Hanani*,	—		930	Elah ... ...
	—		929	Zimri ... ...
	—		—	Omri ... ...
	—		918	Ahab ... ...
	25	Jehoshaphat	914	
	—		897	Ahaziah ... ...
Eliezer	—		896	Jehoram, *or Joram* ...
Jahaziel	8	Jehoram, *or Joram* (4 years jointly with Jehoshaphat and 4 years alone.)... ...	889	
	1	Ahaziah	885	
	6	Athaliah...	884	Jehu ... ...
	40	Jehoash, *or Joash* ...	878	
	—		856	Jehoahaz... ... ...
Zechariah, *son of Jehoiada* ...	—		—	Jehoash, *or Joash*... ...
	29	Amaziah	838	
	—		825	Jeroboam II. ... ...
Zechariah, *(who had understanding in the visions of God.* 2 Chr. xxvi. 5.	52	Uzziah, *or Azariah* ...	810	
	—	—	784	*Interregnum for Eleven Years.*
	—		773	Zachariah ... ...
	—		772	Shallum ... ...
	—		—	Menahem ... ...
	—		761	Pekaiah ... ...
Isaiah	—		759	Pekah ... ...
Micah	16	Jotham	758	
	16	Ahaz	742	
	—		739	*Hosea kills Pekah. Anarchy for some years.... ... ...*
	—		730	Hosea *settled in the kingdom* ... ...
			721	
Nahum	29	Hezekiah	726	The Kingdom of Israel overthrown by the Assyrians.
	—		721	
Joel...	55	Manasseh	698	
	2	Amon	643	
Jeremiah...	31	Josiah	641	
Habakkuk	3 Ms.	Jehoahaz...	610	
Zephaniah	11	Jehoiakim	—	.....
Ezekiel, Daniel,	3 Ms.	Jehoiachin, *or Jeconiah*	599	
Obadiah	11	Zedekiah...	—	
Judah carried captive to Babylon			588	
		GOVERNORS OF JERUSALEM AFTER THE CAPTIVITY.		....
Haggai		Zerubbabel	536	
Zechariah		Ezra...	457	
Malachi		Nehemiah	445	
		Book of Esther	—	

AND PROPHETS OF JUDAH AND ISRAEL.

REIGNED 40 YEARS: DAVID, 1055, B.C. REIGNED 40 YEARS: SOLOMON, 1015, B.C.

Years Reigned	PROPHETS OF ISRAEL.	KINGS OF SYRIA.	KINGS OF ASSYRIA AND BABYLON.	KINGS OF EGYPT AND ETHIOPIA.	ELAM OR PERSIA.
22	Man of God from Judah. Ahijah.			Shishak—1 Kings xi. 40.	
		Benhadad 1 Kings xv. 18		Zerah, *or Osarken* —2 Chron. xiv. 9—15.	
2					
24					
2					
7 Ds.					
12					
22	Elijah. Micaiah.	Benhadad 1 Kings xx.			
2					
12					
28	Elisha.	Hazael			
17					
16	Jonah.	Benhadad 2 Kings xiii. 25.			
41	Hosea.				
	Amos.				
6 Ms.					
1 Mh.					
10			Pul		
2					
20			Tiglath-Pileser— 2 Kings xv. 29; xvi. 7 9.		
	Oded,		Shalmaneser— 2 Kings xvii. 3.		
9			Sargon; Isaiah xx. 1.		
			Sennacherib	Pharoah, *or Sethos*	
			Esarhaddon—2 Kings xix. 37.	Tirhakah	
			Nebuchadnezzar	Pharoah-Necho Jer. xlvi. 1, 10; 2 Kings xxiii. 29.	
				Pharoah-Hophra	
			Belshazzar	Ezek. xxix. 3; Jer. xliv. 30.	Cyrus
					Darius Hystaspes
					Ahasuerus

Thus the kingdom was divided, through Rehoboam's rashness; and our readers will see the time when the double table of kings begins, and when Shishak was reigning in Egypt, who soon after came up against Jerusalem.

And by this answer the kingdom of all Israel has from that day to this been rent in twain. It is added "The cause was from the Lord," or literally "it was a turning brought about by the Lord, that He might perform this saying by the prophet Ahijah to Jeroboam, the son of Nebat. This Jeroboam was an Ephramite, who had grown up to be a "mighty man of valour," and was employed as engineer in the works of fortification round Jerusalem. Solomon had noted his energy and made him overseer of the works.

He had gone one day out of the city, when he met in a cornfield with a prophet named Ahijah, clad in a new garment, to whom had come the Word of the Lord concerning Jeroboam. This messenger snatched the new garment from his own back, and rending it in twelve pieces, gave ten of them to Jeroboam, telling him the Word of the Lord, that he would rend the kingdom out of the hand of Solomon, excepting one tribe—the tribe of Judah, which should remain faithful for the sake of David, while the other ten should be given to Jeroboam, but not until after the death of Solomon.

When this matter reached the ears of Solomon, he sought the life of Jeroboam, but the young man fled to Egypt and remained there with Shishak its king, as we have seen, until Solomon's death.

We may mark this table of kings into three great periods.

I. Of 90 years; from the division of the kingdom to the death of Ahaziah, king of Judah, and Jehoram, king of Israel, both by the hand of Jehu . . . . . B.C. 884

II. 163 years from thence to the carrying away captive of the ten tribes by Shalmaneser, king of Assyria . . . B.C. 721

III. 133 years, including the remaining history of Judah, down to the captivity of Babylon B.C. 588

And it is quite worth while to try and get a definite idea fixed in the memory of annals, that as we first read them in the Scripture, seem rather intricate. The Spirit of God has recorded, and it is for us to classify them in our remembrance.

The kingdoms were very small; that of Israel not ten thousand square miles, and that of Judah not four thousand. Israel's territory may have been a little less than Yorkshire, Lancashire, and Cumberland, united. Judah a little less than Northumberland, Durham, and Westmoreland. Judah, however, lay South, and Israel North. Judah retained the capital, Jerusalem, with most of Solomon's treasures, and the worship of God was maintained at His chosen seat in Solomon's temple, for the sake of His covenant with David.

Although Jeroboam was chosen by God to punish Solomon's sins, this does not justify *his* becoming a rebel leader and then an idolator; his very first acts severed the bond of union with Jehovah, and his course was followed by his successors, of whom one after another, with scarcely an exception. We read,

"And he did evil in the sight of Jehovah, and walked in the way of Jeroboam, who made Israel to sin."

In the line of David and the tribe of Judah the crown was handed on generally from father to son, while in that of Israel the line of Jeroboam ended with his son, and then followed a series of murders and usurpations amidst which the families who reigned longest, those of Omri and Jehu, numbered

only four or five kings each. During the first span of ninety years we have mentioned after the disruption, Judah had six kings and Israel had nine.

The prophets of this era, in the idolatrous kingdom of Israel, were ELIJAH and ELISHA, and also Micaiah; the prophets of Judah being Shemaiah, Oded, Azariah, Eliezer, Hananai, Jehu his son, Eliezer, and Jahazeel. All these are named in Scripture, and their particular messages to the kings declared, but none of them give their names to the prophetical books of the Bible, which sixteen later prophets do, commencing with Jonah.

It has been remarked that grander prophets were sent to the Ten Tribes than to Judah, and among the noblest was Elijah the Tishbite, but Elijah came in consequence of their apostacy; kings had failed to keep the people from idolatry, and so had priests—then the prophets arose to remonstrate, prophecy was God's fresh protest by their mouth against man's sin.

We must notice the early messages to kings: Shemaiah is called "a man of God;" and when Rehoboam had assembled an army of 180,000 men, from the tribes of Judah and Benjamin, who yet addhered to him, to fight against Israel, and, as he hoped, conquer the rebels.

"Then the word of the Lord came to Shemaiah the man of God, saying,

"Speak unto Rehoboam the son of Solomon, and to all Israel, saying,

"Thus saith the Lord, Ye shall not go up, nor fight against your brethren: return every man to his house: for this thing is done of me. And they obeyed the words of the Lord, and returned from going against Jeroboam.

The second message of Shemaiah was one of rebuke, but also of comfort. He first said to the prince of Judah,

"Thus saith the Lord, Ye have forsaken me, and therefore have I also left you in the hand of Shishak."

When in answer to this, the people humbled themselves, the Word of the Lord came to Shemaiah, saying,

"They have humbled themselves: therefore I will not destroy them, by the hand of Shishak.

"Nevertheless they shall be his servants; that they may know my service, and the service of the kingdoms of the countries."

Now this Shishak, king of Egypt, has left a list of the places he conquered, on the walls of the old Temple of Karnak, in the city of Thebes; and the Spirit of God has given us a list relating to the same times, of the cities that Rehoboam made "fenced cities" in Palestine. (See 2 Chron. xi. 5—10.) Shishak came up with 1,200 chariots, 60,000 horsemen, and people without number, and "took the fenced cities" which pertained to Judah (2 Chron. xii. 4); in the fifth year of Rehoboam, when that king "forsook the law of the Lord, and all Israel with him."

In the year 1828 the French student, Champollion, on his passage down the Nile, landed at Karnak, and pointed out the accompanying figure, one of sixty-three prisoners presented to Sheshonk by his god Amunra.

The turreted oval enclosing the name means that it is a walled city. Shishak is depicted as a gigantic figure holding a captive by the hair of the head, with one hand, which he is going to strike off with the other: there are five rows of such captives as these, with features evidently Jewish.

The cap with the lappets and the pointed beard may also be observed as worn by

the prisoners labouring on the mounds of Nineveh for Sennacherib, the king of Assyria, in Hezekiah's later day. They can be seen on the bas-reliefs in the British Museum; how remarkable that God should have brought them up from their grave, when they had been

"Buried three thousand years;"

and recently directed the research of the learned of this day, to old carvings on ruined temples which have endured thus long—to records whose age and value is now fixed only by the statements of the Bible.

Champollion read the Egyptian inscription within the turreted oval, as "Judah Malek, king of the country of Judah;" but while this reading is disputed by later scholars, the monument, according to their observations, is quite as valuable in confirmation of the list of Rehoboam's fenced cities. No one disputes the Jewish physiognomy of the whole series of captives. Very mean and diminutive they are made to appear in contrast with the gigantic god, Ammon—who leads them by strings fastened round their necks, to deliver them to his colossal king Sheshonk, or Shishak. Beneath eleven of the captives are inscribed in hieroglyphs, as above, the names of their cities; two or three of which you will find in 2 Chron. xi. 5—Shoco, Aijalon, and Adoraim, while others are identified as well known in Bible history. Taanach, Megiddo, Gibeon, Beth-horon, Mahanaim, Rehob, and Beth-Shan; and the Bible does not tell us that Shishak took prisoner *the king* of the country of Judah, but only his fenced cities.

You can look for the messages of God by Oded and Azariah in 2 Chron. xv. 1—8, referring to "a long season when Israel had been without a teach-

ing priest and without law." Also to the prophecies of Hanani and his son Jehu, chiefly directed to the kings Asa, Baasha, and Jehoshaphat, (1 Kings xvi.; 2 Chron. xix.) and after studying the reigns of each of the kings in the two lists as far as the avenger, Jehu the son or grandson of Omri, we had better fix our attention for the rest of this era on these grand prophets, Elijah and Elisha, who with Micaiah, appear in the list of the prophets, not of Judah, but of Israel.

Elijah the Tishbite was in his time like another Enoch and another Moses. Each prophesied of judgment to come, and asserted the Divine supremacy in the face of heathen idolatry around them; each proclaimed or revived the law of GOD, each of the two latter had the gifts of miracles, and each left the earth in an extraordinary manner.

Elijah's life was a crisis in the history of Israel. The life of Jeroboam had been followed by that of Ahab, and the worship of the golden calves, even if meant to be cherubic at first, had become mere Baalism. The God of Israel had been supplanted by the idols of Tyre. The curse of God on the builders of Jericho was defied, the thunders and lightnings of Sinai forgotten. The law of Moses was exploded. Jezebel, a daughter of the priest of Baal, shared the throne which had been occupied by David, and the abominations of Tyre and Sidon domineered in the capital of Israel.

Then God overruled evil with good, and sent forth an Elijah. The character of that age is commented upon in the NEW Testament, implying that it has to be studied in the Old. In the Revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ to St. John, when He would speak of a corrupt priesthood, He calls it a Jezebel, (Rev. ii. 20), and when He would describe those who shall rise up and witness against Anti-

christ in the last days of the world, He refers to the acts and the miracles of an Elijah. (Rev. xi. 6.)

Elijah appears before us *suddenly* in the Scripture narrative, as he appeared before Ahab and the children of Israel,—suddenly, like Melchisedek, and as suddenly disappearing, without father, without mother, without descent," etc. He belongs to no special place. The meaning of the derivation Tishbite, is not unravelled; the name of Gilead alone gives him any locality; Gilead, the country on the other side of Jordan. The country of chase and of pasture, of tent villages and mountain castles, of wild chiefs like Jephthah the Gileadite.

But Elijah rests nowhere. Often as soon as he had delivered his witness, the Spirit of the Lord carried him away, whither none knew. "He was as if constantly in the hand of God," "as the Lord liveth, before whom I stand," was his own expression. Sometimes in the Jordan valley, sometimes in the forests of Carmel, now on the seashore of Zidon, now in the wilderness of Horeb, then on his way to Damascus, then snatched to the summit of some lonely hill in Ekron, fleet as the wind when the hand of the Lord was upon him, and when he ran before the chariot of Ahab from Carmel to Jezreel. He was like the Bedouins of the same region as the present day. Long shaggy hair flowed down his back, a large rough mantle of sheepskin was fastened round his loins by a girdle of hide, in which he would sometimes wrap his face (1 Kings xix. 13); and at others roll it up like a staff in his hand (2 Kings ii. 8) when he smote the waters with it, ere he went up to heaven in the whirlwind, and left it to his disciple Elisha.

And to whom does this prophet of God come? to Ahab in the vineyard of Naboth. Ahab, the seventh king of Israel, who had married Jezebel,

for whom he had built an ivory house, while the Lord's prophets were hiding in caves. Elijah comes to destroy the prophets of Baal and restore upon Carmel the ancient altar of Jehovah. The 450 prophets of Baal are dressed in their splendid vestments, and the one solitary prophet of the Lord in his shaggy mantle. He mocks at the false god's silence, and bids the idolaters cry louder yet. Then he builds up the fragments of the ancient altar, and as evening approaches, he bids JEHOVAH the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, hear and reply to his prayer in fire from heaven. The prayer of the righteous man availeth much.

"Then the fire of the Lord fell, and consumed the burnt sacrifices." (1 Kings xviii. 38.)

The fragments of the ox are burned, then the wood of the pile, then the stones of the altar, then the earth that had been thrown out of the trench, and then the very water in the trench itself. Truly it is fire from heaven, the people cried, "Jehovah HE is God;" and the priests of Baal were swept down the mountain slope to the side of the river Kishon, when Elijah becomes the dread executioner to the unresisting prophets, and in one swift and terrible slaughter they fell by the sacred stream.

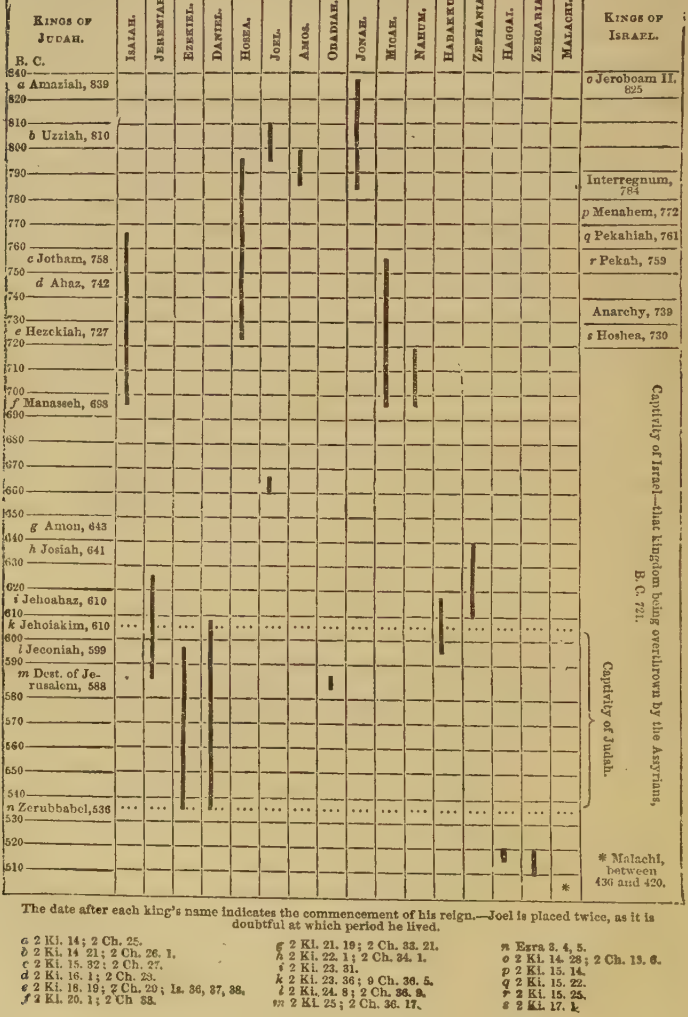
We must leave you to follow out the rest of the history, and that of Micaiah, 1 Kings xxii., the times of Elisha belong to Jehu and Hazael, and must be treated of in our next period.

We will conclude by giving you another very useful table of the lives of those prophets whose names are given to the Books of Scripture. They begin, you see, soon after the first line drawn across the larger table, and at the close of the first period we have been considering, and you will have frequent occasion to refer to *both* tables while reading the two *next* tracts on the Prophets and

the Kings, which will close the Old Testament history.

TABULAR VIEW OF THE PROPHETS,

SHOWING THE PERIODS DURING WHICH IT IS SUPPOSED THEIR PROPHECIES WERE DELIVERED.



The date after each king's name indicates the commencement of his reign.—Joel is placed twice, as it is doubtful at which period he lived.

a 2 Ki. 14; 2 Ch. 25.
b 2 Ki. 14 21; 2 Ch. 26. 1.
c 2 Ki. 15. 32; 2 Ch. 27.
d 2 Ki. 16. 1; 2 Ch. 28.
e 2 Ki. 18. 19; 2 Ch. 29; Is. 36, 37, 38.
f 2 Ki. 20. 1; 2 Ch 33.
g 2 Ki. 21. 19; 2 Ch. 33. 21.
h 2 Ki. 22. 1; 2 Ch. 34. 1.
i 2 Ki. 23. 31.
k 2 Ki. 23. 36; 2 Ch. 36. 5.
l 2 Ki. 24. 8; 2 Ch. 36. 9.
m 2 Ki. 25; 2 Ch. 36. 17.
n Ezra 3. 4, 5.
o 2 Ki. 14. 28; 2 Ch. 13. 6.
p 2 Ki. 15. 14.
q 2 Ki. 15. 22.
r 2 Ki. 15. 25.
s 2 Ki. 17. 1.

ANCIENT ROME.

THE SECOND PERIOD OF
THE TIMES OF JUDAH AND ISRAEL:
FROM ELISHA TO ISAIAH.

No. XV.

We hope that you will so study the Table of Kings and Prophets given you in our last chapter in its three separate portions, that the great messengers of God who lived and spoke in each era, will rise in your memory with each period of years.

The first period, you will remember, included ninety years after the division of the kingdom—that is, from 975 B.C. to 885 B.C. The names of the comparatively *good* kings of Judah are given in large capitals. Perhaps you referred to ASA, and remember God's protecting him against the mighty Ethiopian army under Zerah, or "Osarken" (named on Egypt's tablets), because Asa said, "O Lord God, in thy Name we go against this multitude." (See 2 Chron. xiv.)

Elijah's portrait occupied us last, and our present study must commence with Elisha, who stood to him somewhat in the light that Joshua did to Moses.

"He went after Elijah, and ministered to him." (1 Kings xix. 21.)

It is supposed that he did this for the space of eight years before Elijah's translation; Elisha's call to such ministry is said to have taken place about 906 B.C., and his death, after the discharge of his

prophetical office for nearly seventy years, occurred about 838 B.C. When we hear of him first, he was a young man, ploughing with twelve yoke of oxen in the rich pastures of the Jordan valley.

"Elijah passed by him, and cast his mantle (of rough sheepskin) upon him."

This was in fulfilment of the word of the Lord:

"Elisha, the son of Shaphat, shalt thou anoint to be prophet in thy room. And it shall come to pass, that him that escapeth the sword of Hazael shall Jehu slay: and him that escapeth from the sword of Jehu shall Elisha slay." (1 Kings xix. 16, 17.)

Hazael was king of Syria, who stepped to the throne by smothering his master. Elisha had foreseen "the evil he would do," as he read his face with tears, on the previous day; while Hazael, amazed, enquired, "Is thy servant a dog, that he should do this great thing?" God made *that* usurper the scourge of both Judah and Israel, whose kings united in self defence against him and the Syrians. Jehoram was king of Judah who had married Athaliah, the idolatrous daughter of Ahab and Jezebel, Jezebel herself being the daughter of Ethbaal, the Canaanite king of Zidon. This accounts for all the Baal worship that arrayed itself against the commandments of God in both kingdoms, and to punish which God raised up Elijah, and prophesied as above, of the avenging Jehu.

But ere we mark the avenger Jehu, we must note the career of Elisha. His early life, it would seem, had been agricultural and domestic. He asks leave to take farewell of his friends, and then obeys the Divine summons, and attends his master to the close of his wondrous history. After seeing him parted from his side by a chariot of fire and horses of fire, and swept up into heaven by a whirlwind, Elisha received in that hour according to his earnest

prayer, a double portion of the Spirit that had moved his grand and awful friend. His native character seems less powerful and more gentle than Elijah's, but he was equally used as an instrument of the Holy One—of the Most High God—as Elijah had been, to deliver messages of judgment, whose truth was often proved by their instant fulfilment. "The spirit of Elijah doth rest on Elisha," said the sons of the prophets.

To part the waters of Jordan, to increase the measure of the widow's oil,—to heal the bitter poisonous spring, to inflict and cure disease, to warn and counsel kings, and to defy their rage,—knowing himself surrounded and protected by unseen angelic guards,—to raise the dead to life, and even in his own dead bones to preserve the gift of healing. (2 Kings xiii. 21.) All this was in Elisha's destiny. Elisha so different from Elijah, and yet so one with him in soul! No wild and shaggy hairy man, but with smooth and well shorn locks,* which the very children contrasted maliciously with those of his forerunner,—using a walking staff like other citizens, glad of quiet repose in the friendly balcony, where bed, table, and chair, were prepared for him by the kindly lady of Shunem. He is not found in the desert of Horeb, or lonely on the top of Carmel, but in the crowded thoroughfares of Samaria, in the gardens of Damascus, and by the waters of Jordan. Still ever the Lord's mouthpiece, and instructing kings till his dying day, when Joash the monarch of Judah receives from him a promise of success against Syria, whose measure was to be the measure of his own perseverance and energy. "Thou shouldst have smitten

* This is implied in the term "baldhead."

five or six times," says the prophet, "then hadst thou smitten Syria till thou hadst consumed it." (The man of God was wroth, for the king smote but three times, and stayed.) King Joash however was privileged to repeat to Elisha at the time of his death the very words which Elisha had uttered to Elijah—"My father! my father! the chariots of Israel, and the horsemen thereof." Were the royal eyes unsealed as the servant's had been previously at Elisha's request, to see these glorious attendants of the man of God's departure? (2 Kings vi. 17.) They had, *we know*, surrounded him in mortal peril; what so likely as that they bore his soul to the mansion of its rest?

It is Elisha who sets apart Jehu to his office of avenger; but he does not do this personally.

"Elisha the prophet, called one of the children of the prophets," and bid him "gird up his loins and take a box of oil in his hand and go to Ramoth Gilead, and look out there Jehu, the son of Jehoshaphat, and pour it on his head, and say, Thus saith the Lord, I have anointed thee king over Israel."*

It is needful to observe to some of our readers that this Jehu was not the son of Jehoshaphat king of Israel in the table; he is most often known as the son of Nimshi. There are also two Joram's in the table who were not the same, but brothers-in-law, by marriage of Joram, king of Judah, who *was* the son of king Jehoshaphat, with Athaliah (the daughter of Jezebel) who as a widow succeeded for seven years her son Ahaziah, whom Jehu slew.

What a scene of the retributive justice of God is depicted when Jehu, after his sudden anointing and

* Tradition says that Jonah was this prophet, also that he was the son of the widow of Zarephath, brought to life by Elijah, and destined afterwards to be the messenger to Nineveh.

hasty enthronement by his captains on the top of the stairs (see 2 Kings ix. 13) takes his own war chariot and drives according to his habit, "furiously" to Jezreel, and meets the two kings Joram and Ahaziah uncle and nephew, in the field of Naboth the Jezreelite.

"Is it peace, Jehu?" said King Joram.

And Jehu answers—"What peace? while the witchcrafts of thy mother Jezebel are so many?"

"There is treachery," cries Joram to his nephew king, while Jehu draws a bow with his full strength, and Joram sinks dead in his chariot—Ahaziah by other hands sharing the same fate; and then Jehu remembers the day, when with his captain Bidkar, he had followed Ahab to this very plat of coveted ground acquired by murder, and heard the Lord's threatening by the mouth of Elijah, "I have seen the blood of Naboth, and I will requite thee in this plat, saith the Lord."

But Jehu is a man of blood; and not only *one* son of Ahab, but *seventy* must fall; "all that remained" of the idolatrous house; and then proclaiming "by subtilty" an assembly for Baal, as if *he* would be his servant, even more than Ahab had been, he gathers together all his prophets and his priests throughout the land; and when the house of Baal is full from one end to the other, by a sweeping massacre does this same Jehu remove by the united blows of fourscore men without, (his guard and his captains,) the whole heathen population at a stroke, from the kingdom of Israel.

Oh how striking it is, after studying this story, to behold in the galleries of the British Museum the war chariots, and driving such as Jehu's, gone

out of mind and memory for thousands of years, but come up from their grave to throw light on these very chronicles of Israel.

Who does not know the black obelisk in the central Nineveh room of the British Museum? Mr. Layard had carried a trench fifty feet into one of his sandy mounds; it appeared to yield but little worth notice, and he did not intend to pursue it further, when just as he left the spot a corner of black marble was uncovered, at the very edge of the trench. This corner was that of an obelisk lying on its side, ten feet below the surface, sculptured on the four sides, having on each five small stone pictures; and above, below, and between them were arrow-headed inscriptions, 210 lines in length; all the figures sharp, and well defined.

The habits and dress of the Assyrian king on this

obelisk seem not greatly to have varied from those which distinguished him in the portrait given you at p. 39 and p. 221; he is here twice represented, followed by attendants bearing his arms. He has precisely the same simple helmet, and "the Presence" of Assur accompanies him as before. A prisoner, whom he has conquered, is at his feet, and before him his vizier with folded hands appears submissively to wait the royal decree concerning him. In the second bas-relief below, the same figures are repeated, but the king has the royal umbrella held as at p. 20, over him, and has also the divining cup in his hand. In the first compartment he had his bow and arrows—he had just won his victory. In the second he appears in peaceful state—he offers a libation before the Presence. Perhaps, like the King of Babylon, described by Ezekiel in after years (chap. xxi. 21), "He stands at the parting of the way, at the head of the two ways," to use divination, he has "*made his arrows bright, and consulted with images.*" This may explain the double representation of the king.

It will also be remarked that the person bowing down at his feet, has on the peculiar cap and long robe—the cap like a bag, the end of which falls back, instead of towards the front like the Phrygian cap, and this costume, wherever found, seems by all writers on the subject, to be considered to belong to the Hebrews. Sir H. Rawlinson fixes the scenes represented upon this obelisk to the date of the usurper Jehu. He reads in the inscription that Shalmaneser I. led twenty-three expeditions into the kingdoms of his neighbours, and among these he names the Israelites. From all the conquered peoples he took tribute; and the inscription mentions the name of Hazael king of Syria. "I went to the

towns of Hazael of Damascus, and took part of his provisions." "I received the tributes of Tyre, Sidon and Byblus."

Consequently on the submission of the above, according to Sir H. Rawlinson, follows that of Jehu, "Son of Omri" who sends as tribute to Shalmaneser a quantity of gold and silver in bullion, together with manufactured articles in the more precious of the two metals.

This submission of Jehu, is *not* recorded in the Bible, but a similar submission *is*, of Ahaz to Tiglath-pileser.

"So Ahaz sent messengers to Tiglath-pileser, King of Assyria, saying, I am thy servant and thy son. Come up and save me out of the hand of the King of Syria, and out of the hand of the King of Israel, which rise up against me.

"And Ahaz took the silver and gold that was found in the house of the Lord, and in the treasures of the King's house, and sent it for a present to the king of Assyria." (2 Kings xvi. 7, 8.)

The tribute or spoil, whichever it may be, on the obelisk, seems rendered in the form of elephants' tusks, gold dust, rich vestures and vases, precious woods, wine-skins and fruits, copper caldrons or kettledrums, all borne by the wearers of the long robes, some of them with fillets round their heads and bare feet. Animals also appear in the procession; the elephant and rhinoceros, camels and apes; some are dressed for the sacrifice, according to heathen custom, so that man and beast are declared subjugated to the Assyrian king of kings. The turned up toes and twisted caps are found on three levels, out of five.

Sir Henry says this is Shalmaneser's obelisk, but an earlier Shalmaneser than the one said in the Bible to have "come up against" Samaria. (2 Kings xvii. 3.) It seems to have been *ready to be* carried away with the sculptures by Esarhaddon, for HIS palace at the

south-west corner of the Nimroud mound, for it was lying on its side, and had been buried for five-and-twenty centuries, when the finger of Divine Providence so remarkably guided towards it, the apparently unprofitable trench.

You should notice that the obelisk was *not* found in the earliest north-west palace which lay *the deepest* in Mr. Layard's mound, *and is represented by the first long Nineveh gallery* in our museum. It was found in the *central* palace, which lay next in the mound, and is represented in the museum *by the central room* between the first gallery and the second, in which last are grouped all the conquests of Sennacherib. The obelisk attracts immediate attention in the central room, and some slabs on the walls also should be noticed, which have a singular history. When Mr. Layard first excavated here he came upon many tombs; one, when he lifted its alabaster slab, contained a skeleton, the skull entire, but it crumbled to dust on the entrance of the air. *Five feet below* these tombs he traced the remains of a building; walls of unbaked brick could yet be seen, from which slabs seemed to have been removed. After clearing away twenty tombs, a space of fifty feet square presented a singular appearance. Above a hundred sculptured slabs were uncovered, placed in rows one against another, like the leaves of a gigantic book, and evidently ready for removal to another place.

Three or four of these slabs, removed by the labourers of two thousand five hundred years ago, were to find their place, not in any fresh Assyrian palace, but in the British Museum. One of them represents the taking of a city, within the walls of which grew Judah's palms. The place has been sacked, and the conquerors are carrying off the

spoil. Two eunuchs, standing near the gates, count as they pass the sheep and cattle driven away, and write the numbers with a pen on rolls of paper or leather. On another slab one of Judah's daughters, clothed in sackcloth, and with her elegantly formed pitcher, tends her camels; and on yet another issuing from the city gates, with fettered hands and driven by a proud Assyrian, the sons of Judah, with the caps and turned-up boots already named, seem to lament and mourn.

To this conquering nation of Assyria some time after the reign of Jehu, there was sent the Jewish prophet JONAH, the first of the sixteen prophets whose writings are preserved in our Scriptures.

From his time, to the destruction of the kingdom of Israel, there were raised up six prophets.

To Judah.		*To Israel.*	
Joel.	From Uzziah's	From Jeroboam II.	Jonah.
Isaiah.	reign to	to	Amos.
Micah.	Hezekiah's	Hosea.	Hosea.

THE PROPHET JONAH.

During all the reign of Solomon we hear nothing in the Bible of Assyria or Babylon; and the fact that the Euphrates was recognized as the boundary of Solomon's kingdom (2 Chron. ix. 26), suggests the inference that the monarchies between the Euphrates and the Tigris were then comparatively feeble.

We heard of Assyria at its rise—in the days of Assur and Nimrod. Balaam mentioned Assur in his desert prophecy. Mesopotamia led ISRAEL captive after her grand conquests under Joshua; therefore the new conquerors could have possessed no insignificant military power some centuries before the building of the Temple on Zion. And now Assyria looms again before our eyes, as "the

word of the Lord came to Jonah, the son of Amittai, saying, Arise! go to Nineveh, that great city, and cry against it; for their wickedness is come up before me."

This was an unusual commission for a Jewish prophet; and it was certainly not the first that had been given to him, for this Jonah, the son of Amittai, a prophet of Gathhepher, of Zebulon, had predicted the restoration of the ancient boundaries of the kingdom of the ten tribes (2 Kings xiv. 25), and that prediction received its accomplishment in the reign of Jeroboam II., in whose reign, it would seem, Jonah must have lived. Jeroboam was thirteenth King of Israel, and son of Joash, whom he succeeded on the throne 825 B.C. Jonah may have prophesied early in his reign, as we must again remember that *great cities are not built in a day*, it is to the Nineveh of which these very palaces at Nimroud formed a part that Jonah comes —perhaps, a century and a half after the time of Solomon—to a "Nineveh" containing a vast population, more than 60,000 persons of the ignorant or infant class, and those and their elders *not* packed together as in our western cities, but scattered over the plains of the Tigris as the different mounds are now—the city made up of several distinct walled quarters, distinct from one another, divided by cultivated lands. (Isfahan and Damascus to this day occupy as much space as London or Paris, and do not contain a tithe of the population.) We are told that the so-called Nineveh was three days' journey in extent; and a day's journey being twenty miles, this makes its circumference sixty miles, which Mr. Layard tells us would enclose the various mounds as in a circle, thereby verifying the description of the Bible.

It was the God of Israel who sent this prophet, probably clothed in the prophetic dress, a rough garment of skin, to cry upon those high places, and along those sculptured corridors, in square and caravanserai, bazaar and lane—

"Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown."

The Lord also prepared the heart of the King of Nineveh to listen, seated on his royal throne in his great audience chamber, surrounded by the nobles of his court.

"He arose from his throne and laid aside his robe from him, and covered himself with sackcloth, and sat in ashes."

He decreed sackcloth and a fast also, for man and beast around him, and set up a mighty cry to God, with a command that his people should turn from their besetting sin—the violence that was in their hands. *And the Lord saw* this repentance for the time to be real and true. Our Saviour corroborates it—"they repented at the preaching of Jonas." Alas! that Jonah seemed to hope that the doom he had announced would come, in spite of that repentance!

There is a great group of ruins opposite Mosul called Nebbi Yunus; and on one of its mounds stands a mosque, containing the so-called tomb of the prophet Jonah. Mr. Layard mentions two cylinders discovered there, with sixty lines of writing on each side, and says that one which came into his own possession, being hollow, had been used as a candlestick by a respectable Turcoman family. To such base recent uses have been turned the records of the Assyrian kings.

There are some marvellous records, according to Sir Henry Rawlinson's readings, amongst ancient Assyrian inscriptions, made on cylinders like these,

which tally with the inspired chronicles of Israel's kings. To these very cylinders he gives a date of five-and-twenty years before King Saul.

CYLINDERS OF TIGLATH-PILESER.

In the sixty-two years from the death of Jeroboam II., to the conquest of Samaria by Shalmaneser, there were two periods of anarchy, or no government at all, making up twenty years—and there were six bad kings following one another, of whom only one, Menahem, died a natural death; and he in spite of his unnatural cruelties. In his reign it is recorded (2 Kings xv. 19, 20) as follows:

"And Pul the king of Assyria came against the land; and Menahem gave Pul a thousand talents of silver, that his hand might be with him to confirm the kingdom in his hand.

"And Menahem exacted the money of Israel, even of all the mighty men of wealth, of each man fifty shekels of silver, to give to the king of Assyria. So the king of Assyria turned back, and stayed not there in the land."

This is the first notice we have, after the mission of Jonah, of kings of Assyria, in connexion with the kings of Israel and Judah. Menahem's thousand talents of silver were equal to £340,000.

The Assyrian inscription says, that "Menkihimni of Samirina" (Menahem of Samaria), paid tribute to a king of Assyria—Phuloch, or Pul, or Vul-lush.

That record is on a pavement slab from the chambers of the Nimroud palace. Menahem's tribute has been thought excessive, but it is here stated that from the King of Damascus, Vul-lush took 2,300 talents of silver, besides tribute in gold and copper.

With Pul began the conquests of Assyria over Israel, which were continued by his successors. The prophets, Amos and Hosea, at this period uttered little else but threats and warnings—"I will sift the house of Israel among all nations, says the Lord by Amos, like as corn is sifted in a sieve."

All the chapters of this Prophet are a sorrowful wail over the sins of his people, till, in a few verses of the last chapter, the inspired herdsman sings a far-off strain of comfort at the close of his dirge, unfolding times of mercy yet to come to the Lord's ancient exiled people. (See Amos ix. 14, 15.)

Amos was a shepherd of Tekoa and a dresser of sycamore trees, chosen to fill the office of a prophet, though not trained in the regular prophetical schools. He makes numerous allusions to natural objects and agricultural occupations, as might be expected; and he tells us that he prophesied in the reigns of Uzziah, king of Judah, and Jeroboam, the son of Joash, king of Israel, "two years before the earthquake." This earthquake is referred to in Zech. xiv. 5, in illustration of one which is yet future, as affecting the Mount of Olives.

The duration of Hosea's gift of prophecy seems

to have been nearly fifty years, thus resembling that of the Prophet Isaiah. Hosea's prophecies related chiefly to the kingdom of Israel, and Isaiah's to that of Judah. Both commenced to prophecy in the reign of Jeroboam II., and continued during the reigns of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah. Both Prophets therefore see the invasions of the Assyrian kings — Tiglath Pileser, Shalmaneser, Sargon, and Sennacherib.

You should read the reign of Uzziah, lasting fifty-two years (2 Chron. xxvi.)—a good and prosperous king of Judah, "whose name spread far abroad, for he was marvellously helped till he was strong." And then, alas! when he was strong, his heart was lifted up to his destruction. What a lesson of fear and caution for the successful—his heart was lifted up. He wished to usurp the office of the priests in the temple, and to burn incense; and the Lord smote him with leprosy in his forehead, and he was a leper to the day of his death; and Jotham his son judged the people of the land in his father's stead.

Jotham is a good king. He became mighty and established his ways before the Lord his God; but yet the people became more and more corrupt. And in those days the Lord began to send against Judah Rezin king of Damascus, whose attacks proved so disastrous under Jotham's weak and wicked son Ahaz, who "made molten images to Baalim:" "he sacrificed unto the gods of Damascus," "which were the ruin of him and of all Israel." (2 Chron. xxviii. 23.)

The people of Assyria you will remember carved, *as the only object to be worshipped* in their temples, not a statue, but a *sign* or *symbol* of the presence of their great god Asshur—we gave it you on p. 38.

They expressed the idea by a winged human figure rising out of a circle; and it always accompanied their king.

This winged figure, which was very universally worshipped, is called in Scripture "Baal," or Baalim, and the Sacred Tree which accompanied it "The Groves;" but the word "groves" has given a wrong impression—it ought to have been left as in the Hebrew, "Asshayrah." How marvellous is it to suppose that we have in the Museum before our eyes "the groves" so often mentioned in the Books of Kings and Chronicles. The Baal symbol is sometimes called the *Chammánim*, rendered in the margin "Sun Images." (See 2 Chron. xxxiv. 4.) During King Josiah's reformation he brake down the altars of Baalim, in his twelfth year, and the *Sun Images that were on high above them* he cut down, etc. We have seen what Elijah did to the 950 prophets of Baal and of "Asshayrah" which ate at Jezebel's table (1 Kings xviii. 19); for God had said to His people Israel:

"Ye shall make you no idols nor graven image, neither rear you up a standing image, neither shall ye set up any image of stone [margin, 'any stone of picture'] in your land, to bow down unto it: for I am the Lord your God."

"*Know ye not what these things mean?*" saith the Lord, to us who pass by such stones "crying out," after nearly 1900 years of privilege in the Gospel dispensation. To *us* they ask a solemn question. While they point the Jews to their ancient sin of the worship of Baalim and the Groves, a sin which has rung the funeral knell of their empire, and laid it low for the "seven times" of God's prophetic wrath —they point both Jew and Gentile to *nothing less* than "the True Presence" which these idolatries caricatured.

"Keep me, oh, keep me, King of kings,
Beneath Thine own Almighty wings."

Now before and after the Flood, men have wilfully gone out from "the presence" of God, and have made an idolatrous use of the symbol of the wings, and, nevertheless, this image is often used in Scripture. "The Lord recompense thee," it was said to Ruth, "under whose wings thou art come to trust." (Ruth ii. 12.) "Hide me," says David, "under the shadow of thy wings." (Ps. xvii. 8.) "In the shadow of thy wings will I make my refuge." (Ps. lvii. 1.) "He shall cover thee with his feathers, and under his wings shalt thou trust." (Ps. xci. 4.) "In the shadow of thy wings will I rejoice." In Ps. cxxxix. this presence is described as world-surrounding—"Whither shall I flee from thy presence?" etc., the wings are over all the earth; and this implied protection.

What said the living Saviour to Jerusalem?

"How often would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen doth gather her brood under her wings, and ye would not. Behold, your house is left unto you desolate." (Matt. xxiii. 38.)

And did He not say to His disciples, "Go ye, therefore, and teach *all* nations," and it may aid us afresh to comprehend that Divine and overshadowing love to realize it in the figure of "coming under the wings."

What is it that constitutes a Christian? Is it not dwelling in the Presence, coming under the wings? Once drawn by the Holy Spirit into that blessed shelter, once in the Presence, through the shedding of the blood, the blood of the Lamb—who is he that condemneth?

"It is Christ that died," is the reply, and who shall separate us from the love of Christ? (Rom. viii. 35,) or from those whom we love who are in the

same Presence? It may be said of those who dwell in the Presence that "*they never die;*" they only draw nearer and nestle closer under the Almighty wings when they leave the earth. Have we beloved ones at the world's end—on the other side of the globe? If they are in the Presence, they are not beyond the wings. The Egyptian and Assyrian idea of the wings which by men of old time was perverted to idolatry, may be for those "in Christ," a blessed idea, and worth gathering up from these old stones, for it includes St. Paul's description of our inheritance in Eph. i. 3.

NEBO.

Before we leave the subject of these ancient idols, we must observe two figures of the Babylonian god Nebo, forwarded to this country by Sir H. Rawlinson from the South-east palace of Nimroud. An Assyrian king was named after him 1,200 years B.C.

THE GOD NEBO.

The kings of Babylon take their names from him—Nabo-Nidus, Nebuzaredan, Nebu-chadnezzar; and he is named in Scripture in association with Bel. The ponderous and erect appearance of this idol would seem alluded to in the words:

"Bel boweth down, Nebo stoopeth. Their idols were upon the beasts, and upon the cattle. Your carriages were heavy laden; they are a burden to the weary beast. They stoop, they bow down together. They could not deliver the burden, but themselves are gone into captivity." (Isa. xlvi. 1, 2.)

There is great importance in the resurrection of these heathen deities, as witnesses of the truth of God's Word.

Sir H. Rawlinson is said to read the arrow-headed characters on Nebo's robe as follows:—"That this statue was dedicated by the sculptor to Phulukh (Pul), the king of Assyria, and to his lady, Sammuramit, or Semiramis, Queen of the Palace." It is here declared that Nebo is "the God who teaches or instructs;" "he who hears from afar," "he who possesses intelligence." Nebo is elsewhere called "inventor of the writing of the royal tablets." In an inner chamber of his temple, the Birs Nimroud, all the bricks were found stamped with an arrow-head.

The idolatrous kings of Israel and Judah who bowed down to these images, were always punished for the forsaking of the Law, while those who observed the Law prospered. The kingdom rose or fell according to that rule; this renders the history of the Jewish people especially interesting and instructive, and Israel was now unconsciously tottering to its fall.

ISAIAH.

Isaiah prophesies in the days of four sovereigns—Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah. His first general message is to Uzziah and Jotham, when to the outward eye their kingdom is flourishing in its worldly condition, but to the prophetic eye all is soon to be laid waste. Isaiah sees the chosen nation in the light of a man wounded unto death, and soon to be left desolate. The seeming religion of Judah is now all hypocrisy; "the silver is become dross," and "Zion must be redeemed with judgment." Oh! what a guide are the first chapters of this prophet down the Kouyunjik side gallery of the British Museum. But we are not going to enter this last Nineveh gallery till the next chapter, as we shall want your fresh attention to Isaiah's wondrous book.

We want to fix in your minds at the close of this second portion of the Table of the Prophets two great events,—I. The carrying of the ten tribes of Israel into captivity by Shalmaneser 722 years B.C., which was predicted by the prophet Micah (i.—6) about thirty years before it happened (for it took place in the sixth year of the reign of Hezekiah); II. We wish to point you to the *time* of this prophecy of Micah's, uttered in the reign of Jotham, as that when the infant power of ROME arose (753 B.C.) and became the standing date from which all the great kingdoms of this world have agreed to reckon. We give you as a frontispiece, the ruins of Ancient Rome as they endure to this day.

Micah recalls the name and the mercy shown to his father Abraham (vii. 20), and therefore *looks back* from the exile of the ten tribes, no less than 1260 years, to the time when Terah abode in Ur of the Chaldees, and Abram was a youth of eighteen, to whom the Lord God appeared when he was in Mesopotamia, before he dwelt in Haran. It was from this very point of the leading captive the ten tribes that it was given to the Prophet Daniel and to the Apostle John to *look forward* 1260 years, and see Rome Papal arise out of the ashes of Rome Pagan, and the abomination that maketh desolate set up. Gibbon the historian of Rome tells us that the first Pope was elected A.D. 538, which, added to the date of 722 B.C., makes the number 1260; but this would lead us on to the New Testament era. We must first close the Old Testament story with the exile and partial return to Jerusalem of the royal house of JUDAH.

THE PEAKS OF ISH-TA-ZIN.

THE FALL OF JUDAH.

No. XVI.

We cannot say whether the prophet Isaiah stands out most as the man of his own age, or as the world's teacher for ever.

The passing wars of his time are in his prophecies dignified by their connexion with glowing predictions of the future kingdom of the Messiah; his soul is ever looking "onward and upward;" and we feel that he must for himself have realized by earnest faith that "beautiful and glorious," "Branch of the Lord," (ch. iv. 2,) which would sometime spring from the old root of Israel's desolations. His writings are placed in our Bibles, *first* in the order of the books of the prophets (so-called), chiefly because of those sublime predictions, and possibly because Isaiah's *one* book, as we have it, is larger than those of all the *twelve* "minor prophets" put together.

Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Daniel, are commonly called "the greater prophets," and their books follow one another in our canon, although, actually, *between* Isaiah and Jeremiah, come Joel, Micah, Nahum, and Zephaniah—*between* Jeremiah and Daniel, Habakkuk—and *between* Daniel and Ezekiel, Obadiah. After Ezekiel, Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi, complete the list.

Jonah, Amos, and Hosea, we must remember, preceded all the rest, and of these we have spoken; now let us fix our minds on Isaiah, the prophet of four kings' reigns (see the first verse of the prophecy),

Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, and belonging therefore like Hosea to our IInd and IIIrd periods. See p. 270.

Let us observe how he tells us of his marvellous consecration to his office:

In the year that king Uzziah died, (*i.e.* B.C. 757, and his death occurred at the age of 70, and in the house of lepers), Isaiah beholds a vision in the court of the temple; appears to gaze into the holy place, and to see through the cedar gates and veil withdrawn, straight on to the throne of the heavenly king within;

"His train filled the temple."

Unearthly and radiant beings float around that Presence. The Lord of Hosts, who spoke in the burning bush to Moses, in the still small voice to Elijah, now appears in His cherubic brightness to Isaiah, and, in so doing, gives to the young prophet an abasing view of himself in his earthly weakness, so that he cries out, "Woe is me, for I am cut off. I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell among a people of unclean lips."

Then on these defiled lips was laid by a flaming seraph a living glowing coal from off the altar, and henceforth those lips were to utter the words that for all ages would move the world. Then comes the voice from the sanctuary, "Whom shall I send? and who will go for us?" and the prophet thus made ready, replies, "Here am I, send me."

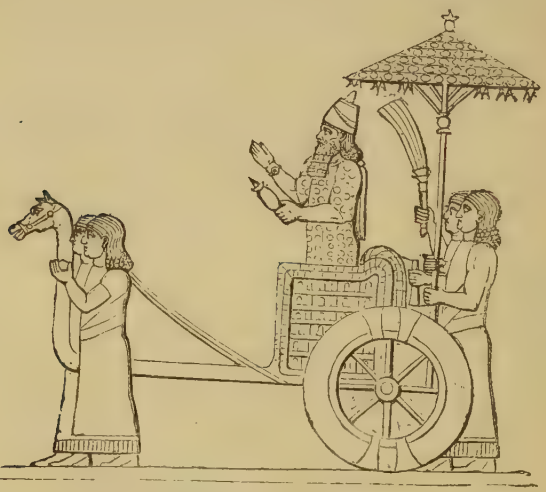
And he is sent, as he is warned, on a forlorn and hopeless mission, to blind eyes, and heavy ears, and unconverted hearts; the description of his own people for age after age in misery and exile, concerning whom his far off comfort could only be according to the name he had given to his son, "Shearjashub," a remnant shall return—a remnant

from the destructions of Assyria and Babylon—and far away in the future, in a day which is future still, when the wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the lion shall eat straw like the ox, when the earth is full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea,—*in that day* the Lord shall set His hand "*again a second time*" (chap. xi. 11) to recover the remnant of His people from Assyria and from Egypt, and from Cush (Africa), and from Elam (Persia), and from Shinar (Mesopotamia), and from Hamath (Syria), and from the islands of the sea, (very possibly Great Britain); and He shall set up an ensign for the nations, and shall assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth; in that day "with joy shall they draw water out of the wells of salvation."

But meanwhile across what a wilderness of woe, and on what hundreds of years of destruction, does the prophet's eye look for his people. Isaiah had a second son, whose symbolic name was Maher-shalal-hashbaz, or "speed to the spoil," (see chap. viii.) and before this child could utter the name of his father or his mother, the vengeance was to begin; and Damascus with Samaria (the northern kingdom of Israel) were to be carried away to Assyria; the prophetic symbol of Assyria and Babylon was an eagle (see Ezek. xvii.) and Isaiah says in his viiith chap. "the stretching out of *his* wings shall fill the breadth of thy land, oh Immanuel." The people had refused to dwell under the wings of God, had "cast away the law of the Lord of Hosts, and despised the word of the Holy One of Israel," (Isa. vi. 24) therefore the Lord would "hiss for the nations from afar," and "behold they shall come with speed swiftly," "with speed to the spoil," whose arrows are sharp, and all

their bows bent, and their wheels like a whirlwind; (look at the Assyrian war chariots, and the kings with their bent bows on the Assyrian marbles), they were to "roar and lay hold of the prey, and carry it away safe, and none should deliver it." This was the prophecy to Ahaz previous to the fall of Samaria.

Judah also is warned in the prophet's tenth chapter. "Shall I not, as I have done to Samaria and her idols, so do to Jerusalem and her idols?" And then it is said, that having begun with His own people, the Lord would next punish "the stout heart of the king of Assyria, and the glory of his high looks."



SENNACHERIB IN HIS CHARIOT.

Behold him at Kouyunjik: the king stands in his chariot, beneath the royal parasol, to receive the captives and the spoil taken from the conquered people.

There would be no better guide than Isaiah the

prophet, if girded in the black haircloth of mourning, he could utter his third and fourth chapters down the Kouyunjik, or third Nineveh Gallery, in the British Museum, how the "mighty man and the man of war, the prudent and the ancient and the captain of fifty, the cunning artificer and the eloquent orator" must "go into captivity," for "Jerusalem is ruined and Judah is fallen." They must go and pile mounds for Sennacherib's palaces, and must transport his great bulls.

Oh! if this great prophet could indeed arise and see how Sennacherib has delineated his conquests and his achievements! We perceive how the "high places were builded;" and upon the builders the prophet would say, as in his forty-seventh chapter—

"Thou didst show no mercy; upon the ancient hast thou very heavily laid thy yoke."

The Assyrian artist has most successfully conveyed a remarkable expression of fatigue into the attitudes, and of age into the countenances and limbs of the king's captives. Many of them are surely Jewish: here is the cap-point turning back, and lappets now cover the ears; bare-footed, and bowing beneath their heavy baskets of stones, the "honourable man" and the "mighty" and the prudent and the counsellor painfully ascend the mound. These are no labourers born—they are patrician slaves. There are younger men among them, whom the task-masters seek to afflict more heavily; and some of these wear fetters, others are chained two and two. (In the glass cases before these slabs lie *the very fetters*, massive and sprinkled with the verdigris of age, which galled those limbs of old.) Has the Lord returned evil for evil? Isaiah says:

"The Lord will enter into judgment with the ancients of his people, and the princes thereof: for ye have eaten up the vineyard; the spoil of the poor is in your houses.

"What mean ye that ye beat my people to pieces, and grind the faces of the poor? saith the Lord God of hosts." (Isaiah iii. 14, 15.)

"O Assyrian, the rod of mine anger, and the staff in their hand is mine indignation.

"I will send him against an hypocritical nation, and against the people of my wrath will I give him a charge, to take the spoil, and to take the prey, and to tread them down like mire of the streets." (Isaiah x. 5, 6.)

THE SIEGE OF LACHISH BY SENNACHERIB.

The prophet Isaiah sings the Psalm of the vineyard (see Isaiah v.):—

"My well-beloved hath a vineyard in a very fruitful hill. . . . What could have been done more to my vineyard, that I have not done in it? wherefore, when I looked that it should bring forth grapes, brought it forth wild grapes?"

Judea was the land of the vine and the olive. In the delineation of the country conquered by these Assyrian lords, and in defiance of all perspective, vines with great bunches of grapes, causing us to think of the vines of Judea, overhang the scenes of blood and murder.

The remaining bas-reliefs in that gallery all belong to the time of Sennacherib, and depict further details of Assyrian cruelties. On the mound men are doing the work of horses—either pulling the king in his chariot (a sort of moveable throne), or dragging carts, or, along the river-sides, boats containing weighty obelisks; and they are all men with the peak and lappet caps, driven by tyrant overseers with sticks.

"In this living and universal language of art, we may well believe that we see a picture of the sufferings to which the children of Israel were ex-

posed when their cities fell before the conquering Assyrians, and their inhabitants were sent to colonize distant provinces of the empire; and thus, doubtless, were driven the inhabitants of Samaria through the desert to Halah and Habor, by the river of Gozan, and to the cities of the Medes."

THE SUBTERRANEAN HALL.

We can now re-pass the central saloon, and by way of the lobby chamber descend the stairs to inspect the records of further deeds of cruelty by Sennacherib before Lachish.

The besieged have defended themselves with great determination: archers and slingers are showering arrows, javelins, stones, and blazing torches on the enemy. Part of the city has, however, been taken. Beneath the walls the Assyrians are commencing their tortures. A procession of captives is driven into the presence of the king, who, gorgeously arrayed, receives them seated on his throne.

SENNACHERIB.

Again, we see the unmistakeable Jewish physiognomy of the defeated race, and the women clothed in sackcloth are in the same carts as in the central palace slabs. The captives are brought into the royal presence by the Tartan of the Assyrian forces, possibly the Rabshakeh himself (followed by his principal officers), who were speedily afterwards despatched to Jerusalem.

"And the king of Assyria sent Tartan and Rabsaris and Rabshakeh from Lachish to king Hezekiah with a great host against Jerusalem." (2 Kings xviii. 17.)

Submission on the part of Hezekiah to tribute appears to have taken place at Lachish.

"And Hezekiah, King of Judah, sent to the King of Assyria to Lachish, saying—I have offended, return from me; that which thou puttest upon me I will bear; and the King of Assyria appointed unto Hezekiah King of Judah 300 talents of silver and thirty talents of gold."

Sennacherib's own record of this on his cylinder, and also between the feet of the Kouyunjik bulls is as follows:—

Then Hezekiah, King of Judah, who had not bowed down to my yoke, forty-six of his large cities, and smaller towns belonging to them without number, in the fury of my vengeance I utterly destroyed.

Two hundred thousand one hundred and fifty persons, small and great, male and female, horses, mares, mules, camels, oxen, and sheep, without number, from the midst of them I carried away and distributed them as spoil. He himself, like a fugitive bird, shut himself up in his royal city, Jerusalem.

He built towers of defence (or battlements) over it, and he strengthened and rebuilt the bulwarks of his great gate.

In the meanwhile, the cities which I had sacked I finally cut off from his dominions, and I gave them to Mitinti, King of Ashdod, Padiah, King of Amgarrun, and Ismi Bel, King of Gaza.

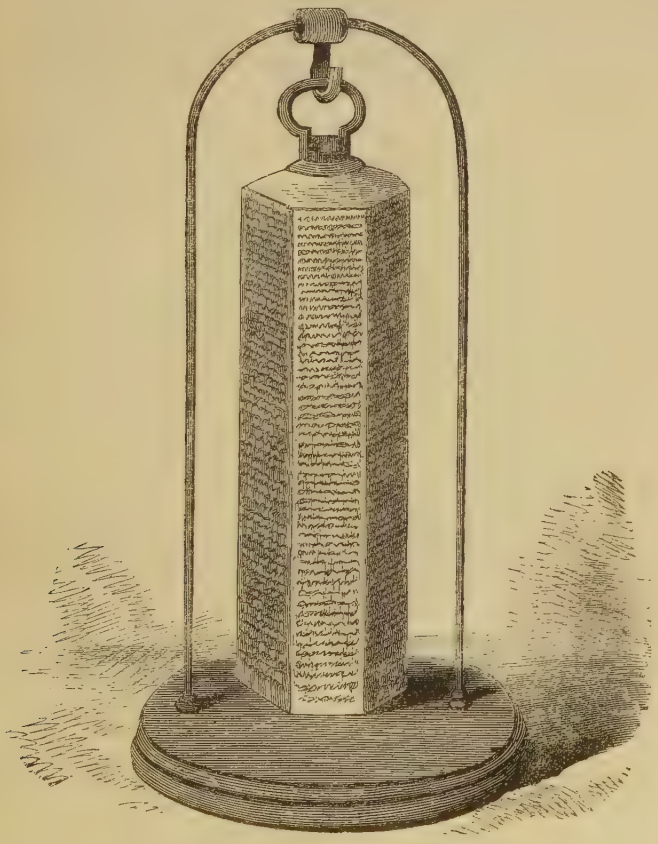
Thus I diminished his country. And in addition to the former tribute and the land-gift (or land-tax) I augmented the tribute of . . . . and imposed this burden upon them. As to Hezekiah himself, the dreadful terror of my power had overwhelmed him.

Then I seized and carried off all his artificers, and all the other . . . . whom he had collected in order to fortify Jerusalem . . . . . with thirty talents of gold, eight hundred talents of silver, scarlet robes, precious *stones* (?), royal *thrones* (?) made of ivory, palanquins of ivory for travelling, skins and teeth of elephants, beautiful precious woods of two kinds, altogether a vast treasure. And also his daughters, and the *female inhabitants* (?) of his palace, and their men slaves and women slaves.

This mighty spoil, unto Nineveh, my royal city, after me I brought away. And he swore a solemn oath to pay tribute to me, and to do homage to me in future.

In passing through the lobby chamber at the top of the stairs in the Nineveh gallery you may find

the cylinder *suspended on a frame* on which all the above inscription is written. It is called Sennacherib's cylinder, and Sir Henry Rawlinson reads upon it that he inscribed his records in the 16th year of his reign.



CYLINDER OF SENNACHERIB.

The characters on this cylinder appear when magnified as at p. 29 of this volume. They expressed the thoughts of the old Chaldeans, Assyrians, and Per-

sians, ere the commencement of profane history, and only fell into gradual disuse after the time of Alexander's conquests, about 330 B.C.

The heathen annals of Sennacherib have been compiled not only from this which is called the Taylor cylinder, but from large inscriptions *between the limbs* of some Colossal Bulls at Kouyunjik, the upper part of whose figures had been destroyed.

"These bulls," says Mr. Layard, "were all more or less injured. The same convulsion of nature, for I can scarcely attribute it to any human violence, that overthrew these great masses, had shattered some of them into pieces, and scattered the fragments amongst the ruins. Fortunately, however, the lower parts of all, and consequently the inscriptions, had been more or less preserved, and to this fact we owe the recovery of some of the most precious records with which the monuments of the ancient world have rewarded the labours of the antiquary."

These inscriptions may now be seen in the Museum, *on the wall*, behind the great bulls from Khorsabad, at the entrance of the Egyptian Hall. The name of Hezekiah upon them is spelt Hiskiah; and the *thirty* talents of gold exacted as his tribute, both according to the Scriptures and the records of this cylinder, is a very wonderful coincidence. (See 2 Kings xviii. 14.)

You will notice that in the book of Isaiah all is not prophecy, there are portions of the most stirring history. In the year 722 B.C. the kingdom of Israel ceases, and Judah subsists alone under Hezekiah. After various predictions against the surrounding nations, Egypt and Assyria, and Tyre and Babylon, the thirty-sixth chapter commences with the fourteenth year of the reign of Hezekiah,

which had been given in 2 Kings xviii., xix., and xxth chapters. Isaiah does not mention the tribute, but describes Rabshakeh's wrath and Hezekiah's prayer.

And it is Isaiah who repeats the wondrous tale of 2 Kings xix. that the angel of the Lord went forth and destroyed the army and smote in the camp of the Assyrians 185,000 men, and in the morning they were all dead corpses.

The Assyrian came down like the wolf on the fold,
And his cohorts were gleaming in purple and gold.
The sheen of their spears was like stars on the sea,
Where the blue wave rolls nightly on deep Galilee.

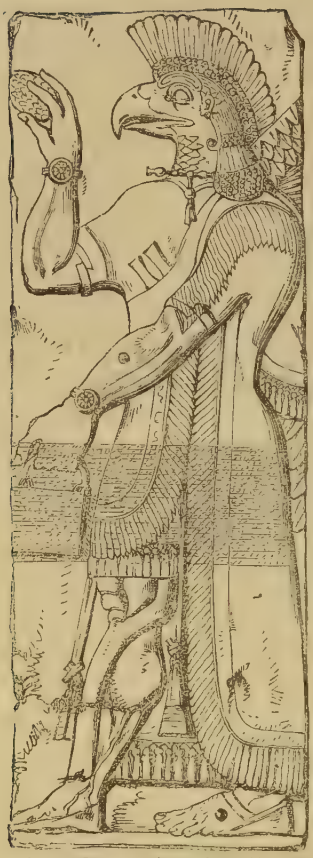
Like the leaves of the forest when summer is green,
That host with their banners at sunset were seen;
Like the leaves of the forest when autumn hath blown,
That host on the morrow lay withered and strown.

For the angel of death spread his wings on the blast,
And breathed on the face of the foe as he passed;
And the eyes of the sleepers waxed deadly and chill,
And their hearts but once heaved and for ever grew still.

The widows of Asshur are loud in their wail,
And the idols are broke in the temple of Baal;
For the might of the Gentile, unsmote by the sword,
Hath melted like snow in the glance of the Lord.

It was the word of the Lord by Isaiah, that He would put His "hook in the nose, and His bridle in the lips" of the Ninevite king; and that He would cause him to fall by the sword in his own land, and then he records its fulfilment.

"So Sennacherib king of Assyria departed, and went and returned, and dwelt at Nineveh. And it came to pass, as he was worshipping in the house of Nisroch his god, that Adrammelech and Sharezer his sons smote him with the sword: and they escaped into the land of Armenia: and Esar-haddon his son reigned in his stead." Ch. xxxvii. 37, 38.



A curious light is thrown on this passage by the fact of an eagle-faced figure called Nisroch, being often found in the North West Palace of Mr. Layard's mound. It may have come to be looked upon as a god in the after days of Sennacherib, though at first it may only have been a symbolic representation of the power of Asshur. The eagle could look at the sun, and he worships the Asshayrah by the king's side; he is probably the symbol of the Assyrian empire; and can we approach this figure now and not think of Ezekiel's parable and riddle?

"And the word of the Lord came unto me, saying,

"Son of man, put forth a riddle, and speak a parable unto the house of Israel;

"And say, Thus saith the Lord God: A great eagle with great wings, long-winged, full of feathers, which had divers colours, came unto Lebanon, and took the highest branch of the cedar:

"He cropped off the top of his young twigs, and carried it into a land of traffic; he set it in a city of merchants."

But Sennacherib was not finally to destroy Judah in the time of Hezekiah. *Her* destruction was to come from one who is called by God "the hammer of the whole earth," Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon. The policy which drew Hezekiah towards Babylon in the latter part of his reign, may have

had an evil influence over his young son Manasseh, for it is certain that the religious errors of Manasseh were Babylonish, and his punishment came from the same quarter.

The description of Manasseh's idolatries exceeds that of all other forms of vice that Israel had learned from the heathen. He restored all the groves and high places that his father had removed, re-established the worship of Baal, which Jehu had overthrown, and added to the licentious rites of Ashtoreth such awful abominations as made princes and subjects "rulers of Sodom" and "people of Gomorrah." The ark was displaced from its shrine in the temple, and altars for the worship of the host of heaven were set up in its courts. Manasseh dealt with wizards and necromancers, and seduced the people to do more wickedness than the nations whom Jehovah had destroyed before them. Against these awful sins witnessed all the prophets of the time as Isaiah had done, in the visions which foresaw them, but the king tried to silence all remonstrances by the fiercest of persecutions. Manasseh filled Jerusalem with innocent blood. Josephus says that executions took place *every day*. And there is an abiding tradition that Isaiah himself was among the martyrs. He must, however, have been nearly ninety years of age at the accession of Manasseh, therefore it is scarcely probable.

After the death of Isaiah the prophetic voice is hushed till the time of Josiah.

Esarhaddon carries Manasseh captive to Babylon. This king (some of whose bricks have been recently recovered) is otherwise called the great and noble Asnapper who re-colonizes Samaria with settlers from Babylon and other places. Manasseh's captivity marks the beginning of the fall of Judah, and

the Bible mentions it as a very important era. Jer. xv. 1, 4. When God said *as certainly* that He would "cast this people out of his sight, and let them go forth," as He had said to Abraham that He would choose them and give them the land of Canaan, He fixes the date of His Divine resolve from the time and sins of Manasseh, rather than from the fall of Jerusalem afterwards.

To the very king, Manasseh, whose personal sins were specified by God as winding up the doom of his people—to that very king was at last granted repentance, and as it seems "repentance unto life." His evil son Amon succeeded him in a short reign of but two years, and then came Josiah the pious and righteous child-king who rose into manhood as a reformer of all evil, and in the eighteenth year of his reign sent to Hilkiah the high priest for silver to pay the workmen whom he had set to repair the house of the Lord. Josephus says the errand was for *gold* to cast fresh cups and vials for the temple service; and in bringing out the money, whether gold or silver, from its hiding-place, the high priest lighted on the holy books of Moses, long unread, and gave them to Shaphan the scribe to read to the king, to whom they came with all the force of a fresh revelation of the will of God.

"The king having heard that," says Josephus, "sent to Huldah the prophetess (2 Kings xxii. 15), that she might seek to appease the wrath of Jehovah, which the books said was upon the people for their transgressions, lest they should incur the peril of being cast out of their country like the ten tribes."

Huldah was evidently the person most distinguished at that time for prophetic gifts in Jerusalem. Jeremiah was yet at Anathoth unknown to fame, although the word of the Lord began to come to

him in the thirteenth year of Josiah. (See Jer. i. 2.) When the prophetess heard the appeal of the king's messengers, says Josephus, she told them from God that He had *already* passed sentence, and meant to destroy the people and cast them out of their country, a sentence no prayers could reverse, since it had fallen upon them on account of their long transgression of the law, but concerning the young king who sent to enquire, it was added—

"Because thine heart was tender, and thou hast humbled thyself before the Lord, I will gather thee unto thy fathers . . . in peace, and thine eyes shall not see all the evil."

THE BURNT ROLL.

We must now pass on from Josiah, who *found* a part of the word of God when it was lost, to JEHOIAKIM, who dared to *burn* a part of it, in defiance of God and His prophet Jeremiah.

Josiah and Cyrus are the only two persons in Scripture besides our Lord, prophesied of *by name*, long before their birth. You will find the prophecy concerning Josiah in 1 Kings xiii. 2, and its literal fulfilment in 2 Chron. xxxiv. 5.

When he found the roll, he honoured it, and caused the people to "stand to it," as for thirteen years afterwards they did. With Josiah ended the peace, the prosperity, and the piety of Judah; and the history of that kingdom closes with the reign of Jehoiakim, which lasted eleven evil years. *He was the first person who dared to destroy any part of the written word of God*, and he might therefore well be Judah's last king. The reverence of the Jews in general for their Divine writings was so great, that if, in copying the manuscripts, they made a single error, they would reject the material thus spoiled, and have begun all again. They never permitted

themselves to retouch or erase; and in coming to the name Jehovah, they always wiped their pens and refilled them. When the manuscripts became at all old or injured, they reverently buried them in graves; and this is the reason why there have not hitherto been found any very old Hebrew manuscripts of the Scriptures—none earlier than A.D. 1200.

Jehoiakim felt none of this reverence. He daringly sent his page, Jehudi, to fetch the roll of the prophecy which he heard Jeremiah had written against him, from the scribe's chamber in the temple, and then he also told Jehudi to read it to him.

Jehudi, however, had read but three or four columns, when the king, who sat in his winter house with a fire burning before him, snatching it from the reader, cut it with a penknife, and cast it into the fire.* Two or three of the princes around begged him not to burn it, but he would not hear them. He was then about to seize the writers, Jeremiah and Baruch, but it is said, "the Lord hid them."

For this crime it was decreed by God that Jehoiakim should have none to sit upon the throne of Judah, and that his dead body should be cast out in the day to the heat, and in the night to the frost, which was literally fulfilled, as recorded by Josephus in the eighth chapter of his tenth book,—"the body of the king was thrown into the fields without the walls of the city;" "his burial was as the burial of an ass, beyond the gates of Jerusalem;" and then all the wealth of the city, its princes, its mighty men, and many thousands of captives, were carried away into captivity by Nebuchadnezzar, for seventy years, to Babylon.

* See Jeremiah xxxvi. 23.

THE TAKING OF JERUSALEM BY NEBUCHADNEZZAR.

Jehoiakim's son, Jehoiachin, was placed on the throne as a vassal prince, but retained his position only three months, and was then carried captive to Babylon; his uncle Zedekiah, governed eleven years under the same tribute to Babylon, after which, rebelling, Jerusalem was once more besieged, and finally "spoiled" by Nebuchadnezzar. "The virgin marble of the courts ran red with blood like a reeking winepress in the vintage," and the two great pillars of the temple porch—Jachin and Boaz—with the brazen sea and its twelve bulls, were broken up and carried to Babylon; after which the temple and city were set on fire, and the walls levelled with the ground, while Moab and Seir were saying—"Behold, the house of Judah is like unto all the heathen" (Ezek. xxv. 8), and the house of Edom cried also —"Rase it, rase it, even to the foundation thereof" (Ps. cxxxvii. 7, 9.)

THE FALL OF NINEVEH.

And sixteen years before Judah passed into captivity, 588 B.C., she had seen the fall of Nineveh—she knew the prophecies of her inspired Nahum—and she knew how well the prophet's words had been fulfilled.

The "cedar," "whose root was by great waters, whom all the trees of Eden envied," his branches were fallen, his boughs were broken, and it was written—

"All the people of the earth are gone down from his shadow, and have left him." (verse 12.)

The destruction of Nineveh and the extinction of the empire took place between the time of Zephaniah and that of Ezekiel, about 606 B.C. The city

never rose again from its ruins. The total disappearance of Nineveh is fully confirmed by the records of profane history. Herodotus speaks of the Tigris as "the river on which the town of Nineveh formerly stood." An extraordinary rise of the Tigris, which swept away a portion of the city wall, gave admittance to the enemy. The Assyrian monarch, considering further resistance to be vain, fired his palace, and destroyed himself, and Cyaxares completed the ruin by razing the walls and delivering the whole city to the flames; the elements of water and fire combining to fulfil the prophecy of Nahum—

"The gates of the rivers shall be opened, and the palace shall be dissolved." (Nahum ii. 6.)

"The gates of thy land shall be set wide open unto thine enemies; the fire shall devour thy bars." (Nahum iii. 13.)

The other royal palaces of the region show equal traces of fire with those of Nineveh; and calcined alabaster, masses of charred wood and charcoal, colossal statues split through with the heat; all that composed the royal palaces and temples went down together into ruins and heaps, to be forgotten for twice twelve hundred years. The winds of age after age piled the sands of the desert over their tomb, and they became the grass-grown sites of Arab villages, and were thus preserved of God to come up as a sign from heaven to us who live in the nineteenth century after Christ.

Those ancient enemies, the Assyrians, had perished from the region, but the remnant of Israel still remains there—brought low and humbled, but still "the beloved of the Lord."

"I often watched the Chaldeans or Nestorians," says Mr. Layard, "as they reverently knelt, their heads uncovered, under the great Bulls, celebrating

the praises of Him whose temples the worshippers of those frowning idols had destroyed."

And surely the Lord beheld "His people," and the children of Abraham His friend, and had brought *them*, and none other, to bow down before Him at this fresh entrance to the crumbling halls of the Assyrian kings.

There were priests and deacons of that ancient Chaldean Church among the workmen.

A FAMILY OF THE MODERN "KALDANI" OR NESTORIANS, EMPLOYED BY MR. LAYARD IN THE EXCAVATIONS AT NINEVEH.

The picture at the commencement of this chapter is of the Koordish Mountains, which form a part of Ancient Assyria, to which the Nestorian Christians betook themselves centuries ago, for safety from persecutions as bloody as those which beset the Waldenses of Piedmont. The American missionaries (the venerated Dr. Perkins and his colleagues), who have rekindled the lamp of God's Word for the sheep of these forgotten folds, have with their native helpers scaled these peaks and threaded these gorges,

to point them to Jesus Christ the Good Shepherd. We have had letters from Nestorian Bible-women dwelling with their missionary husbands in such lonely glens.

In the interim between this and the Day of Pentecost their race have been the "salt" of the Eastern world during the "dark ages" of Europe. The Tablet of Segnanfoo cries out in witness that they had penetrated with their Bible even to China.

"When the Day of Pentecost was fully come," and the Holy Spirit spake by the disciples in the "own language" of "every nation under heaven" to the foreign dwellers at Jerusalem, *who*, besides the devout Jews, *first* understood the utterance of "the wonderful works of God"? *Who but the Parthians (the modern Kurds or Chaldeans), Medes and Elamites (Assyrians and Persians), and the dwellers in Mesopotamia?* The blood of Israel in their long captivities was mingled with those old nationalities, and only the two tribes had returned to Jerusalem under Ezra. The inspired men of Palestine now took their ancient brethren captive with the truth—the truth that "all the house of Israel might know assuredly that God had made that same Jesus whom Judah had crucified, both Lord and Christ." (Acts ii. 36.)

There seems no reason to doubt that at this era, the era of their baptism and receiving of the gift of the Holy Ghost (see Acts ii. 38, 39), that Chaldean Church of Christ took rise which has ever since called itself the "Beni Israel." At this hour their forlorn remnant is completing its almost 4000 years' history,—the children of Abraham by divine choice, of Abraham who himself was called of God out of Ur of the Chaldees.

THE ROCK OF BEHISTUN.

JEREMIAH AND THE NATIONS.

No. XVII.

It was for her IDOLATRY that Judah lost her land. She rejected God and His word: and since the days of Jehoiakim, she *has never possessed her kingdom* but as the servant of some foreign power. She held it under the Babylonians, the Persians, the Grecians, and the Romans,—the four Gentile kingdoms which the prophet Daniel calls "Beasts," in his seventh chapter; and even now under the Roman power in its papal form, (the so-called "holy shrines" being scattered over all her mountains,) Jerusalem still abides till the times be fulfilled, when, returning *first* to that Moses and the prophets (Mal. iv. 4) whom Jehoiakim cast aside, she shall forswear the vain traditions with which she has overlaid the Law, and go up once more to build the old wastes, and repair the desolations of many generations; and there, "*at Jerusalem*, the spirit of grace and supplication being poured upon her," as Zechariah tells us, at chapter xii. 10, "She shall look upon him whom she hath pierced, and mourn;" and "all nations shall call her blessed in her delightsome land." (Mal. iii. 12.) The prophecies foretelling the siege of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar will be found in—

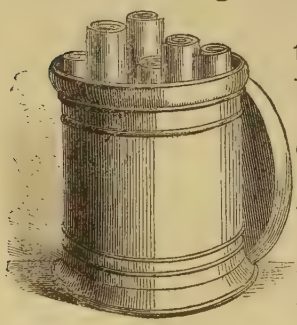
Isa. iii. Jer. xxv. 9—12; xxvii. Ezek. xii.

She had worshipped, after the manner of Egypt, creeping things and abominable beasts (Ezek. viii.) even close to the sanctuary of God, therefore He at

last had dealt with her in fury; and Ezekiel (x. 8), had seen Him depart from off the threshold of the house on the cherubim's wings, "scattering coals of fire" over the devoted city, as He went to return no more in glory in that dispensation.

It is from the three great prophets, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Daniel, that we are enabled to learn most about the scenes of the seventy years captivity. The warnings of Jeremiah followed his people on their way, the visions of Ezekiel on the river Chebar assured them that the glory which once filled their temple was not wholly withdrawn from them even as outcasts and exiles, Ezekiel helped them thus to bear their sorrows, and Daniel cheered them on to their partial return into Palestine.

The prophets Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel were directed to write their prophecies in a roll, as well as to utter them in some public place where all might hear. The roll was in many cases affixed to the gate of the temple, where all might read it; and they often accompanied their message by some significant action on their own part. Jeremiah made a yoke and put it on his neck, to foretell the captivity of Babylon. Isaiah walked barefoot, and stripped off his rough prophet's garment, to show what was coming on Egypt.



When the prophecy was not to be fulfilled for ages, they were commanded to seal it up, "it being requisite that the originals," says Mr. Horne, "should be compared with the event when it occurred." It seems to have been a custom for the prophets to deposit their writings in the temple,

and lay them up before the Lord. There is a belief among the Jews that all the sacred books were placed in the side of the ark. We here give you a picture of the cases in which written rolls were generally kept in this age, and long after it.

Isaiah is the chief prophet in the *first*, or Assyrian period of prophecy; and Jeremiah is the chief prophet in the *second*, or Babylonian period. King Hezekiah and probably Isaiah died about 700 B.C.—Jeremiah's long career begins 70 years afterwards, in the reign of Josiah, whom he so greatly loves and tenderly laments.

Jeremiah continues to prophesy until after the destruction of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar; it is probable that his inspired warnings extend over a period of more than 50 years. He must have seen the destruction of Nineveh, and it is remarkable that in writing his twenty-fifth chapter, "in the fourth year of the reign of Jehoiakim, when taking the" wine cup of divine fury at the hand of God, and causing all nations to drink of it; "all the kingdoms of the world which are upon the face of the earth" (ver. 26,) Assyria is not mentioned. Hence it is believed that *already*, and perhaps just previously, God had "caused the nations to shake at the sound of its fall," (see Ezekiel xxxi.) "Behold the Assyrian was a cedar in Lebanon." The date of Ezekiel's prophecy is from the year of the destruction of Jerusalem, 588 B.C.; and he goes down into exile to Babylon with his people. Jeremiah remains in Palestine, and is afterwards carried against his will to Egypt, with Baruch, his friend and scribe.

But we must trace his remarkable life from its beginning.

He had a wonderful call to his prophetic ministry,

which we find recorded in his first chapter. Before his birth, like Josiah and Cyrus, the Lord tells him he was sanctified and ordained as "a prophet to the nations," *i.e.*, not only to Israel, but to the other kingdoms of the earth. He was to hand the cup of doom to Judah first. In humble fear at such a summons, Jeremiah says:

"Ah, Lord God! I cannot speak, I am a child."

But the touch of the Lord is laid upon his mouth, like Isaiah's glowing coal, and his mournful and mixed message is declared to him.

"Whatsoever I command thee thou shalt speak.
"I am with thee to deliver thee, saith the Lord.
"See, I have this day set thee over the nations, and over the kingdoms, to root out, and to pull down, and to destroy, and to throw down . . . and to build, and to plant."

Then the prophet sees the vision of the fast budding almond tree, and of the seething-pot, about to overflow, against "all who have burned incense to other gods, and worshipped the works of their own hands," whilst testifying against all such by Divine authority. Jeremiah, the prophet of evil, is to be made a defenced city, an iron pillar, a brazen wall, no body can hurt or hinder him till his message is delivered against kings and princes, people and priests; morning after morning, year after year, "rising early and speaking," (chap. xxv. 3,) from the time of Jehoiakim to Zedekiah. The doom must be uttered, and uttered daily, leaning on Him who said, "I am with thee to deliver thee."

And it was so.

But who is this child in his own esteem, thus made by the Almighty His messenger?

Jeremiah is the son of Hilkiah, of the priests that were in Anathoth; his uncle, Shallum, bears the same name as the husband of Huldah the prophetess.

(2 Kings xxii. 14.) Hanameel was his cousin; he seems to have been in his early youth intimately connected with the persons most remarkable in the religious history of the period. As a boy he would hear among the priests of his native town, not three miles distant from Jerusalem, of the idolatries and cruelties of Manasseh and his son Amon; he would doubtless have studied the writings of Micah and Isaiah, and as he grew towards manhood he would be keenly alive to the work of the reforming king Josiah, and the teaching of the prophetess Huldah, probably his own relative. His friends, Baruch and Seriah, were the grandsons of Maaseiah the governor of Jerusalem. And now came the word of the Lord unto himself, and (at about, it is supposed, the age of twenty) a life-long martyrdom was set before him, a struggle against all the earth. At this time is found the lost portion of the book of the law of the Lord. The king rends his clothes and cannot rest till he has found a prophet to expound its meaning, and it is declared to him by Huldah. (2 Kings xxii. 15.) The secretary, Shaphan, brings her message to Josiah, and the king aloud recites the newly found roll of the law, probably the Book of Deuteronomy, from end to end, to an immense concourse of the people in the court of the temple, while he leans against the pillar at the entrance of the inner court. (2 Kings xi. 14; xxiii. 3.)

And then his reformation began: and he held the great last Passover, and to the utmost of his ability, began to uproot the shrines of the pagan worship on all the surrounding hills. He burned the images and ground them to powder, and executed the priests of the false worship on their own altars, and then arose at the call of God, even a greater than Josiah, this young prophet Jeremiah, to set forth afresh the

code of Sinai, but with a nobler meaning now than in the days of Moses, to shew forth the LOVE OF GOD, as the chief ground for his dealings with his people, and responsive love to God for the first time is set forth as the true ground of service to Him, and urged upon the nation with the force of Divine appeal.

But it did not reach their hearts: "*too late*" is written upon even this revival. The word *had gone forth* for Manasseh's sake, as Jeremiah tells us (chap. xv.), and the doom had begun. Forty years before had Manasseh been carried captive, and in less than as many years more the Holy City too would be trodden under the foot of the heathen. Zephaniah looks out, the watchman of Jehovah, and declares—

> "The day of the Lord is at hand,
> The great day of the Lord is near:
> A day of clouds and thick darkness:
> Against the fenced cities,
> Against the lofty towers."

And it came—it came in the death of Josiah, slain by the Egyptian archers in his chariot at Megiddo, and carried to Jerusalem to die, when Jeremiah chants his funeral-song, as pathetic as David's over Jonathan. Every family shut it itself up and mourned apart, as one mourneth for his only son, for the last, the very last, royal hero of Israel. His loss formed the burden of mournful songs even after the captivity.

But it is in the reign of Jehoiakim, placed on the Jewish throne as a puppet of Pharaoh-Necho of Egypt, that Jeremiah comes forth to fulfil his prophetic destiny and testify against that evil king. Here the great struggle of his life begins.

On one of the solemn feast-days, when the temple

was filled with worshippers from all the cities of Judah, Jeremiah appears to predict that Jerusalem shall become a curse. (Jer. xvi. 8.)

"Now it came to pass, when Jeremiah had made an end of speaking all that the Lord had commanded him to speak unto all the people, that the priests and the prophets and all the people took him, saying, Thou shalt surely die."

Yet for a time he escapes their vengeance, as powerful friends protect him, and as had been promised "the Lord was with him to deliver him:" he is deterred by no terror; he re-writes the roll which Jehoiakim destroyed. As the dangers he prophesied drew near, there was given to this prophet a clearer insight of the purposes of God for His people—he was shown the potter casting away the imperfect vessel, and as we see in his twenty-fifth chapter and twelfth verse, the term of the seventy years' captivity is clearly revealed to him.

But, it is wonderfully given him as it was to the prophet Isaiah, to *see beyond* the gloomy cloud into a glorious future. He is himself put in the stocks, and thrown into a hideous pit in the prison where he sank into the mire; but still "the Lord is with him to deliver him," and he is taken out of it but to reiterate his message and advise surrender to Nebuchadnezzar. He was not carried captive to Babylon, but left with a small remnant of his friends in the Holy Land, which remained even when the Holy City was no more. The new capital was to be at Mizpeh, on the ridge overlooking Jerusalem from the north-east. From these heights Jeremiah may have descended to pour forth his Lamentations, which you find at the end of his prophecy, and of which each chapter is a separate elegy. From this point he could watch the pilgrims flocking in the first

freshness of grief, as *they do still*, to the Jewish wailing-place. (Jer. xli. 6.)

THE PILGRIMS TO JERUSALEM.

Jeremiah was weary of the weak and wayward rule of the unhappy princes that closed the line of Judah; but God gives him to console himself with the thought, that while the ancient covenant is to be done away, there will be a new covenant, a new understanding, between God and man—written in the hearts of those who are brought into union with their Heavenly King.

The Almighty Ruler of nations has unsealed his eyes, and shown him that he stands on the edge of a vast revolution in his part of the globe, *for the old primeval kingdoms which were founded after the Flood were about to be broken up, dissolved,*

and swept away by the hand of Nebuchadnezzar, of Babylon, "the hammer of the whole earth"—just such a revolution as if England, France, Spain, Italy, Germany, Austria, and Turkey were to be extinguished by the sudden spread of the Russian empire over the breadth of Europe, amid tremendous conflicts and fearful massacres.

The details of this revolution form the main subject of the writings of Isaiah, Nahum, Amos, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, and Jeremiah. The prophet Daniel foretells the four great empires that were to be founded on the ruins of these earlier monarchies —the BABYLONIAN, the PERSIAN, the GRECIAN, and the ROMAN.

"Not to understand something therefore of this revolution," it has been truly observed, "is not to understand nearly half of the Old Testament Scriptures;" therefore we have endeavoured to lead you by these successive steps through the books of the Bible, and to know a few things that the last fifty years have brought to light concerning them; so that in approaching the revolution of Nebuchadnezzar you may *realize this most stirring tragedy* enacted in past times on the sorrowful earth, and directed by the providence of God.

During the thirty-three years that our Redeemer trod the soil of the ancient East—while, in the depths of His humility "He came to His own, and His own received Him not"—the eye of the All-seeing must surely have beheld the heathen relics piled in darkness beneath the foundations of Arab villages. He remembered His prophet Jonah, and took him for a sign of His own tarrying in the tomb; and He remembered Nineveh and its burial, when He said it should rise in the judgment with the generation to whom He spoke, which could

have been none other than the Jews, His countrymen.

From Palestine, the "strip of country about the size of Wales," which yet was "the high bridge between the Nile and the Euphrates, (see p. 216,) Jeremiah could look down in idea—and in part *actually*—on all the nations to whom he prophesies evil, from his 44th to his 51st chapter. First he writes to the Jews in Egypt, and tells them that the country where they have taken refuge shall not escape: neither shall *they* by their flight. (See ch. xliv. 12.) Nebuchadnezzar shall smite Egypt, "Pharaoh and all that trust in him."

This ancient kingdom was intensely proud. Her king, Pharaoh Hophra, says Herodotus, "had boasted that it was not even in the power of God to dethrone *him*"; and Ezekiel compares him to a great dragon lying in the midst of his streams, and saying, "My river is mine own, and I have made it for myself." (Ezek. xxix. 3.) Nebuchadnezzar caused him to be strangled in his own palace. He made dreadful havoc in the dominions of the Pharaohs. God had put the sword into his hand, and he was to break the images, and burn with fire the houses of the gods, while the Jews, who had gone down to Egypt, and wickedly determined to burn incense to the queen of heaven *there*, were to be consumed in these judgments, till there was an end of them.

From that hour Egypt has been the basest of the kingdoms, and Israel has leant upon it as a staff no more. The prophecies against it are found in—

Isaiah, xix.; xxx. 1—7. Ezek. xxix. and xxx.
Jer. xlvi. Ezek. xxxi. 1—18; xxxii.
Joel. iii. 19.

And for their fulfilment, besides the destruction

caused by Nebuchadnezzar, you must likewise refer to the times when the Persian war-cry rang through the crowded streets of Thebes, when Cambyses laid his destroying hand on Karnak and its sculptures, and when Alexander the Great completed the ruin his predecessors had begun.

PHILISTIA.

The 47th chapter of Jeremiah concerns the destruction of the Philistines, the people of the five powerful cities to the south of Palestine—Gaza, Ashdod, Askelon, Gath, and Ekron. Their country, from its situation, held the keys of Egypt, and through its rich plains passed the commerce of Syria and Phœnicia from the North, and the spices of Arabia from the South. The Philistines had ships and traded in slaves with Edom. See the prophets Amos and Joel. Nebuchadnezzar took Gaza and reduced the population to a remnant.

TYRE.

The same 47th chapter of Jeremiah also includes the prophecy concerning Tyre, which is so much enlarged upon by Ezekiel. Tyre, the capital of Phœnicia, to the north of Palestine, on the seaboard—the city on the rock, overlooking the sea—the noblest colony of the sons of Mizraim (Gen. x. 14; Jer. xlvii. 4), reposed beneath the shadow of mount Lebanon. Four years after Nebuchadnezzar had been used to chastise the Jews, he was employed in punishing the sins of Tyre.

Tyre, the merchant-city, was to the old world what London now is to the new. Her glory is described in the 27th chapter of Ezekiel; her fall is prophesied in the 28th. Of Nebuchadnezzar's army during the siege it is said, that by the toils of

thirteen years before its walls every head was made bald, and every shoulder was peeled—a result arising from wearing their armour so long, and carrying burdens to build the high terraces from which they made their attack. Seldom has the deep gathered such a harvest to its treasures as when Tyre fell in the midst of its waters. Its ruined pillars of red and white marble lie scattered along the shore. For the prophecies of the destruction of Tyre, see—

Isaiah xxiii.; Ezek. xxvi., xxvii., xxviii.

Tyre yielded to Nebuchadnezzar B.C. 571, nineteen years after the prophecies against it. Like all the heathen cities, Tyre was wicked and proud. She had said, "I am perfect in beauty;" and her heart was lifted up because of her beauty.

Her magnificence has been brilliantly described by inspired and modern writers. "Those Phœnicians were the Englishmen of antiquity; yet they spoke a language not unlike the Hebrew, and had an Asiatic aspect. let us imagine these skilful and enterprising merchants, colonizers and brokers, dyers in purple, great ship-builders, vast cultivators of the fine and useful arts, building up for a thousand years a marvellous fabric of wealth and grandeur. Tyre and Sidon are their London and Liverpool; their kings have marble palaces ceiled with cedar; the temples of their gods are plated with gold; the shore is skirted with the noble mansions of their merchant-princes. And behold the Tyrian galleys: benches of box inlaid with ivory, flags of fine linen embroidered in scarlet and blue, and awnings of purple, made them "very glorious in the midst of the seas."

The Mediterranean is covered by their lofty ships of traffic: three hundred Phœnician colonies—Car-

thage at their head—depend for their supplies on the commerce which the mother-country draws to her ports of the wealth of all the eastern nations. It comes by multitudes of caravans through the deserts from afar. Tyre bears the treasures to Sicily and Italy and Spain, and by Gibraltar to the western shores of Europe; and their adventurous ships even reach Penzance to trade for tin. The jewels of Ceylon and of India are in these markets, the ebony and ivory of Ethiopia, the embroidered robes of Babylon, the sword-blades of Damascus, and blue mantles from the looms of Kedar.

The king of Tyre sits aloft "like a god in the midst of the seas," and he sees not that through the infinite villanies of his traffic he has incurred the wrath of the King of kings. Tyre and all her fleets are soon to burn like a mountain of cedars in the midst of the waters, and the sceptre of the seas will pass away to other men.

THE CITIES OF BASHAN.

The nations to which Jeremiah was the prophet—and a prophet of evil and curse, of "rooting up" and "pulling down"—lay all round the land of Bashan. Jephthah the Gileadite had dwelt among the mountains of Gilead, on the east of the Jordan. And how early was that fertile soil far-famed for its sovereign balm and spices! Did not the Ishmaelites, who carried away Joseph with them (Gen. xxxvii.), come from Gilead, with their camels bearing balm and myrrh, going down into Egypt?

Bashan was the land that the Lord had blessed.

Look back to the castle of Salcah (p. 61), and survey all eastern Palestine, with the help of the

small map on page 44, in which you will find all the names Jeremiah mentions in his 48th chapter. It is the land of the old stone cities, of which you have the stone door at page 181, and the description in our tenth chapter. Jeremiah utters his prophecies against all these—Moab and Ammon, Bethgamul and Kerioth and Kunuwat; which, while Nineveh, Tyre, and Babylon have passed away and are no more seen, still—YES, STILL, at the end of more than 2000 years—present their glorious massive ruins, the ruins of all intervening ages to the eye of the traveller,—temples, palaces, towers, columns, and tombs rising out of the foliage of the oaks of Bashan; while luxuriant creepers of each modern summer wreathe their capitals. A colossal head of Ashteroth, with the crescent moon upon her brow, takes us back at Kunuwat to the Ashteroth Karnaim (meaning two-horned) of Gen. xiv. 5.

We have yet to ascertain the meaning and see the fulfilment of Jeremiah's 31st chapter, where he says,—

"Set thee up waymarks, make thee high heaps: set thine heart toward the highway, even the way which thou wentest: turn again, O virgin of Israel, turn again to these thy cities.

"Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will sow the house of Israel and the house of Judah with the seed of man, and with the seed of beast.

"And it shall come to pass, that like as I have watched over them, to pluck up, and to break down, and to throw down, and to destroy, and to afflict; so will I watch over them, to build, and to plant, saith the Lord."

How many cities in all parts of the world have been founded, destroyed, and founded again, and then a second time swept away, so that the very spot where they stood has long since been forgotten! But here, in this land, are memorials that have been suffered *to remain*, though for centuries hidden from the gaze of man; perhaps, it has been said, "in an-

ticipation of a day when men should begin to doubt the history recorded in Scripture, and when such doubt should increase into utter and wide-spreading infidelity: then, when most required as witnesses for the truth, these old places should be again brought to light by various travellers, to give a mighty though silent testimony to the minute accuracy of the Scriptures, which seventy years ago was neither known nor needed, as, alas! it is at present."

PETRA.

Next in order Jeremiah mentions Edom (chap. xlix.,) of which the southern capital is Petra.

When Nebuchadnezzar destroyed Jerusalem, the Edomites were almost as numerous as the Jews. Moses tells us (Gen. xxxvi. 1), that Esau is Edom. Esau had hated Jacob, and their children were always at enmity. The Edomites had united with Nebuchadnezzar to besiege Jerusalem, and urged him to raze it even with the ground (Psalm cxxxvii. 7.) The prophecies against Edom are very many, and are a continuation of God's wrath upon Amalek, which became the ascendant race and general name for all the children of Esau. These prophecies are distinct from those against Ishmael, whose children are spoken of as the tribes of Kedar and Nebaioth. On Esau, or Edom, the judgments pronounced are by far the most severe, and on his city, Petra, they were chiefly poured. Spoiler after spoiler ruined it. The people worshipped the sun and moon, and made their houses, palaces, and temples in the rocks and sides of the mountains which surround the valley in which Petra is situated. This wondrous city, with its rock-hewn pillars and statues of exquisite beauty, once the halting-place and mart of all the caravans of the wilderness, fell under the dominion of Jews, Greeks, Romans, and Arabs, till it became what it

now is,—"an utter desolation," "none passing through it for ever." For 1200 years its very existence was unknown: it is approached only through a narrow defile of rocks, two miles in length, through which but two horsemen can ride abreast, under festoons of climbing plants and trees. At the end of the defile, Petra, the dead city, bursts upon you, silent and beautiful in its desert tomb. For the prophecies against Edom see—

Jer. xxvii. 3—11; xlix. 7—22; Joel iii. 19.
Ezek. xxv. 12—14; xxxii. 29; Obad. ver. 1, 8, 9.

And that all these things were fulfilled before the time of Malachi, we know from Mal. i. 2, 3.

THE JEWS.

Meanwhile what does Jeremiah say of his own people finally by the word of the Lord? See his fiftieth chapter.

"Israel is a scattered sheep; the lions have driven him away: first the king of Assyria hath devoured him; and last this Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon hath broken his bones.

"Therefore thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel; Behold, I will punish the king of Babylon and his land, as I have punished the king of Assyria.

"And I will bring Israel again to his habitation, and he shall feed on Carmel and Bashan, and his soul shall be satisfied upon mount Ephraim and Gilead.

"In those days, and in that time, saith the Lord, the iniquity of Israel shall be sought for, and there shall be none; and the sins of Judah, and they shall not be found: for I will pardon them whom I reserve."

The two latter verses cannot yet be said to have been fulfilled. We have now brought the people to the point of their exile.

There is a touching picture of the sufferings of Israel in the Subterranean Hall of the British Museum, which certainly seems to give the figures of Jewish priests with the "linen bonnet" which Mr. Holman Hunt, the eminent modern painter of

Our Saviour in the Temple, has often noticed and remarked that he studied his picture from similar living models in Jerusalem. It is said in Exod. xxviii. 40, concerning the sons of Aaron—

"And bonnets shalt thou make for them, for glory and for beauty."

The edge of this "consecrated" bonnet appears to be jewelled; it is a "goodly bonnet of fine linen" (Exod. xxxix. 28); but the wearer in his

CAPTIVES TAKEN IN SUSIANA.

long robe is so emaciated that he seems nearly starved to death. The contrast between the stout arm of the captors and the thin, shrivelled limbs of the sufferers praying for quarter is indeed a "dumb stone crying out."

We know, from what is said of Daniel and Ezekiel, that, in the days of their exile, the people were not without their Scriptures. By the rivers of Babylon they sat down and wept; they wept when they remembered Zion.

On their return from their long captivity, and after they had rebuilt their temple, they having forgotten the Law, it was re-delivered to them by Ezra, of whom the Jews always speak as of a second Moses; and they say he lived, like Moses, for 120 years.

This forgetting of the Law, on the part of the people, argues, that the copies of it had been very scarce, and that it had not been publicly read to them all the while they were in Babylon; and yet, even there, Daniel, who wrote in kings' courts, and Ezekiel, on the river Chebar, in solitude, at thirty miles' distance from the city, had been inspired to add to the sacred writings two of the most wonderful of the prophetical books—bearing their own names.

At the appointed time, King Cyrus, having conquered Babylon, (according to the book of Daniel,) and being made to see, by that prophet, the prophecies that God had uttered concerning him, in the days of Hezekiah, as the deliverer of the Jews (Isa. xliv. 8), issued an edict, permitting them to return to Jerusalem.

You will find the history of their return in the books of Ezra and Nehemiah.

Only the "remnant" of the nation returned; many, it seems, preferred staying in Babylon; vast numbers went to Egypt. A hundred thousand earnest men (perhaps scarcely so many, for Ezra speaks of the return only as "giving us a nail in the holy place") sought once more the land of their fathers. The journey occupied four months, and was accomplished in two bodies, or caravans. They still suffered great distress on their arrival, and did not for twenty years begin to rebuild their temple; and when it was completed, the elder Jews, who had seen the holy and beautiful house of Solomon, wept over this second temple in comparison with it,

for, alas! in this temple four things were wanting. There was no ark, no sacred fire on the altar, no answer by Urim and Thummim, no Shekinah or cloud of glory between the cherubim. Still they rejoiced in the re-establishment of the passover and the temple service; and under Nehemiah the city walls were rebuilt on the old foundations.

The republishing of the Law by Ezra did not take place till 80 years after the return of the first caravan of pilgrims from Babylon.

This we must reserve for our next and last chapter.

On the western frontiers of Media, and on the high road from Babylonia to the eastward, a rocky hill rises abruptly from the plain to the height of 1700 feet. It is not an isolated hill, but the face of the end of a range of hills. This hill has always been considered sacred. The Greeks say that a temple of Jupiter once stood upon it. The name Behistun is derived from Bagistane, or "The place of Baga" (*i.e.*, God).

In the year 1837, Colonel Rawlinson, then a young man, happened with his troop to be in the neighbourhood of this Rock of Behistun; and his attention was drawn, not for the first time, to the remarkable figures and inscriptions upon it, carved at an elevation of 500 feet from its base. Now he knew that the neighbouring Arabs spoke of these as the sculptures of Darius, and he remembered to have heard, when a boy at school, that some scholar in Germany had made out a name in some similar inscription: and this vague remembrance allured him onwards.

He soon observed enough to make out that the writings were in three languages, though in a similar character: a clue to the reason of which was afforded by the fact, that if a governor of Bagdad at the

present day wished to publish an edict for general information, he would be obliged still to employ three languages—the Persian, Turkish, and Arabic. In the ancient age the languages must have been Assyrian, Medean, and Persian.

The grand interest of this rock is, that after twenty years of toil with other learned students Sir Henry Rawlinson is convinced that these inscriptions contain the alphabets which alone unravel all the secrets of the Assyrian marbles.

He pronounces this rock a record made by the Darius Hystaspes mentioned in Ezra vi., and inscribed in the year previous to his ratification of the decree of Cyrus for rebuilding the temple at Jerusalem (521 B.C.)

It therefore comes in course as an illustration to our present period of Jewish history.

The frontispiece of the present chapter is THE ROCK of Behistun, which belongs to the era of Israel's return from the seventy years' captivity.

On this rock is written, according to Sir Henry Rawlinson's readings, what was the extent at that time of the mighty PERSIAN EMPIRE.

"Says Darius the king: I am the ninth of my race. By the grace of Ormuzd I have become king. Ormuzd has granted me the empire.

"Says Darius the king: These are the countries which have fallen into my hands by the grace of Ormuzd,—Persia, Susiana, Babylon, Assyria, Arabia, Egypt, Sparta, Ionia, Armenia, Cappodocia, Parthia, Zarangia, Aria, Chorasmis, Bactria, Sogdiana, the Sacœ (Scythians, the Sattagydes, Arachteans, the Mœcians—being twenty-one countries.

"Says Darius the king: These countries have brought tribute to me; that which I have said to them by night and by day they have performed."

The AHASUERUS of the book of Esther is now considered to be XERXES, the son of this DARIUS.

THE PARTHENON OF ATHENS.

THE PROPHETS OF THE CAPTIVITY,

AND THE

RETURN OF THE REMNANT.

No. XVIII.

It was only quite towards the close of Jeremiah's lengthened day that Ezekiel received his commission from heaven: and there was a wide difference of character between them. Jeremiah is gentle, calm, and tender in spirit; Ezekiel is full of consuming fire; he was the son of a priest, and was taken captive to Babylon eleven years before the destruction of Jerusalem; he dwelt, with other Jewish exiles, on the Chebar, a stream of Babylonia.

Here God's message first reached him (Ezek. i. 3); although the Jews had a notion that the Divine Presence could not overshadow and inspire a prophet out of the Holy Land. He was called of God in the fifth year of Jehoiachin's captivity.

Ezekiel was priest and prophet among his companions, a precious sign to them that God had not entirely forsaken them; his mission extended over twenty-two years (see chap. xxix. 17), during part of which Daniel was living, and already famous. Ezekiel's prophecies are wonderfully varied. They include instances of visions, chap. viii., xi.; symbolic actions, iv. 1—8; parables, chap. xvii.; proverbs, chap. xii., xviii.; poems, chap. xix.; allegories, chap. xxiii., xxiv. The Jews thought his prophecies obscure, and did not allow them to be read till the age of thirty; yet they placed him in the highest rank of prophets.

His book is divided into two great parts, of which the destruction of Jerusalem is the turning point.

His *first twenty-four* chapters are delivered *before* that event, and the remaining twenty-four after it; and the first thirty-two chapters chiefly deal in correction and reproof, while the rest are full of consolation and promise. There seems a parenthesis in the midst of the book (like Jeremiah's), from the xxv. to the xxxii. chapter, containing a group of prophecies against *seven* heathen nations, Ammon, Moab, and Edom, the Philistines and Phœnicians, also on Egypt and Persia, and in chap. xxxii. we are pointed to their "graves in the sides of the pit."

At Erech (or Warka) in Chaldea, the second city of Nimrod, the daughters of the famous ancient nations took their places alike literally and symbolically "in the sides of the pit," at the fall of their kingdoms. Here the dead were buried for more than 2000 years. Warka was a vast necropolis; all Lower Chaldea abounded in sepulchral cities of immense extent, but Warka seems to have been the most sacred. Sir Henry Rawlinson considers it to have been Ur of the Chaldees. Ezekiel's description is magnificent, and surely applies to it. It comprises all the sons of Noah; Shem's race are there in his posterity of Elam and Assur; all the children of Ham are there. Mr. Layard found some Egyptian remains in the Mound of Nimroud which he could not account for. Nor is the line of Japhet wanting, for there are Meshech and Tubal with all their multitudes.

"Asshur is there and all her company; his graves are about him: all of them slain, fallen by the sword;

"There is Elam and all her multitude round about her grave.

"There is Meshech, Tubal, and all her multitude. . . .

"There is Edom, her kings, and all her princes. . . .

"There be the princes of the north, all of them, and all the Zidonians." (Ezek. xxxii. 22—29.)

But the line of Arphaxad were not laid in that grave. In *their* great "valley of dry bones" the

same prophet (Ezek. xxxvii. 2) sees them lie *alone:*—

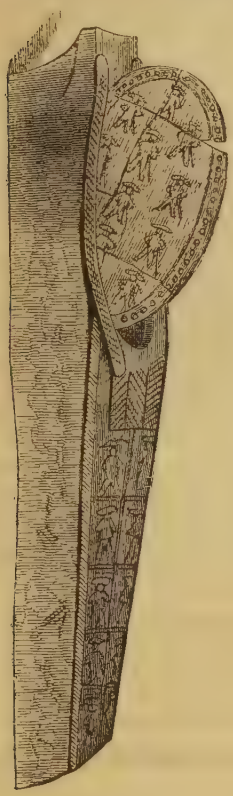
"Very many in the open valley; and, lo, they were dry.

"And God said unto me, Son of man, can these bones live? And I answered, O Lord God, thou knowest.

"Then He said unto me, Son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel; behold, they say, Our bones are dried, and our hope is lost; we are cut off for our parts.

"Therefore prophesy, and say unto them . . . Ye shall know that I am the Lord, when I have opened your graves, O my people, and brought you up out of your graves."

"Ur," or "Hur," (the name found upon its cylinders,) or "Erech" means "the ark city." Its mounds are found to be composed of coffins, piled in layers of perhaps sixty feet in depth. From the foundation of Warka by Nimrod until it was finally abandoned by the Parthians, a period of probably two thousand five hundred years, it appears to have been a place of graves. The city cannot have been less than fifteen miles in circumference, and an unknown extent of desert beyond the walls is still filled with relics of the dead.



The Parthian coffins are shaped like a slipper. Hundreds are yearly broken up by the Arabs in search of gold and silver ornaments, and they bore through one coffin into another for this purpose. The small antique funeral lamp is often also carried off from vault or trench. One or two of these fragile coffins have, with great

care and pains, been brought to England, and may be seen in the Nineveh galleries of the British Museum.

They are glazed with a rich thick green enamel, and were only removed in safety by papering them within and without.

Into that deep abyss, that grave of nations, Ezekiel sees the giant form of the Assyrian empire hurled with a crash like some aged cedar of Lebanon. (Ezek. xxxi.) Here too, old Egypt, so famous for her august burials, was to descend, not into the deep repose of painted sepulchre, or of massive pyramid, but to be dragged like the dying crocodile of her own rivers (Jer. xlvi.), and cast out with the unclean, blood-stained corpses of uncivilized races—the wild hordes of Northern Asia, into the promiscuous pit, and ere the funeral procession closed, it would include another mighty form.

Jeremiah had turned his prophetic eye to the fall of the all-conquering Babylon itself. Who has not heard of its brazen gates and its 676 squares, its walls and its hanging gardens, where Nebuchadnezzar said, "Is not this great Babylon which I have built?" Who does not remember the hand that wrote in fire on the walls of Belshazzar's palace? and having referred to the prophecies of the fall of this mighty empire in—

Isa. xiii.; xxi. 9; xlviii. 14—20; Jer. l.; li.

—you will be prepared to read the sublime narration of Daniel, who was the eye-witness of all its horrors, in the fifth chapter of his own book.

Daniel was the fourth of the greater prophets, but of his family and parentage little is known. He appears however to have been of royal or noble descent, and of great personal endowments. He was taken to Babylon in the third year of Jehoia-

chim, and trained for the king's service. Him also God called to be a prophet, and to interpret dreams, which lifted him into the position of "ruler of the whole province of Babylon;" and at the accession of DARIUS he was made first of "three presidents" of the empire. At the accession of CYRUS he still retained his prosperity, and beheld his last recorded vision on the banks of the Tigris.

During the Babylonian captivity, Daniel was inspired to give to the world two pictures of the further events that would occur in the 400 years which were to introduce the kingdom of the Messiah.

The figures which compose his first picture had previously been presented in a dream to the mind of Nebuchadnezzar himself; and Daniel was called upon to declare what the king had seen, and to explain its meaning.

Nebuchadnezzar had seen in his dream an image with a head of gold, its breast of silver, its middle of brass, and its legs of iron, the feet partly iron and partly clay, and he had seen a stone cut out without hands smiting this image on its feet, and breaking the whole fabric to pieces.

This dream Daniel was commissioned thus to explain. He told Nebuchadnezzar that he, the King of Babylon, was himself the head of gold; that after his kingdom should come three other kingdoms, each less glorious than his; and that all four should be destroyed by a greater kingdom than any of them,—the kingdom of the God of Heaven, which should last for ever. You must read the dream and its interpretation in the second and third chapters of the book of Daniel.

The prophet's second picture is contained in his seventh chapter; and it is a picture of the same

four great empires, but now represented under the form of four great beasts, who were also to succeed one another in dominion.

Further visions (in the eighth chapter) informed Daniel that the second kingdom was that of the Medes and Persians, the third that of the Grecians. The fourth empire is not named, but it is fully described, and events proved it to be the mighty power of Rome.

All ancient history confirms the truth of this magnificent prophecy. The Babylonian empire passed away, as we have seen, at the taking of Babylon by Cyrus: the Persian empire fell when Darius was conquered (B.C. 330) by Alexander, who is the leopard of the picture, with four heads; while the Grecian ceded to the Roman power about 150 years before Christ, which then began to eclipse all others, and having conquered Carthage soon became the sovereign of the world.

It principally concerns us to know what became of the Jews during this period. Among themselves the high-priests had the chief power. The sixth in succession from the time of their governor Nehemiah was Simon the Just: his most important work (according to tradition) was the final arrangement of the books of the Old Testament. He added to Ezra's collection the books of Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther, and Malachi; and thus completed the canon of Scripture.

We must not forget to realize Ezra's ministry to the remnant that returned from Babylon.

EZRA'S MINISTRY.

Upwards of 50,000 of the people were assembled in Jerusalem, in the square of the water-gate—as many as were assembled in Trafalgar Square, in

London, at the funeral of the late Duke of Wellington.

A surging sea of human faces is always a grand sight. On the day that Ezra preached (and it was early in the morning of the Jewish Sabbath) 50,000 faces were upturned towards the pulpit of wood on which he stood, surrounded by thirteen more preachers on a platform or gallery—six on one side of him, and seven on the other. Thirteen other teachers seem to have been present on another platform, to read by turns, so that all the people might be addressed.

When Ezra ascended the pulpit and opened the roll of the Law, the whole congregation stood up: then he offered prayer and praise to God, the people bowing their heads and worshipping, with their faces to the ground; and at the close of the prayer, with uplifted hands they said, "Amen."

Then, all still standing, Ezra (assisted sometimes by the Levites) read the Law distinctly, gave the sense, and caused them to understand the reading: a model of what preaching still should be.

The Law as delivered by Ezra so affected the hearers that they wept exceedingly, and about noon Ezra and Nehemiah thought fit to restrain it. From the great excitement they evinced, it would seem that the reading of their Scriptures in the language they understood (Chaldee) was a new thing to them. In the temple service it had no doubt been read in the sacred language (Hebrew).

On the second day the reading was resumed, they were again instructed in the Law; and they then appear to have arrived at the 31st chapter of Deuteronomy, when Moses commanded the keeping of the Feast of Tabernacles, which they immediately prepared to obey. They gathered, as of old, branches

of palm-trees and willows of the brook, the pine, the myrtle, and the foliage of the Mount of Olives, to make booths; and there was very great gladness.

Under the shadow of these booths, for the space of seven days, they remembered all the toils of the wilderness; and day by day Ezra read to them in the books of the Law of God,—probably in *all* the books; for the Old Testament was now complete, with the exception of the history of the current times. Doubtless the *history* of the nation was read, and they were made to review God's dealings with them; very likely the *Psalms* were sung relating to the events which David and others had celebrated; and we cannot but believe that Ezra also pointed to the *Prophets*, and showed the people how minutely many of the words spoken by them had been fulfilled.

They knew that God's revelation was supported by the great pillars of miracle and prophecy; and at this era the common people under Ezra's teaching must have been taught to feel the strength of both. *They stood in the midst of the circle of doomed countries, on all of which the threats of their sacred writings had been fulfilled, as well as most bitterly upon themselves.*

Nineveh, Tyre, Petra, Thebes, and Babylon as well as Jerusalem, had all been desolated within the space of forty years by Nebuchadnezzar. Judgment had begun at the house of God, as it always does; and the divided kingdom of Israel had, as we have seen, fallen by the hand of the kings of Nineveh, 730 B.C.

How deeply the lesson of all these vast fulfilments of the Word of God was impressed upon the minds of the returned remnant of Judah, we may judge from the fact, which all history confirms, that they ever afterward felt a profound dread and aversion for all the Pagan idolatries.

Ezra did much to cut off idolatry at its root, by causing them to put away at once their heathen wives. This was a severe and terrible measure, and it grieved him deeply to enforce it (see Ezra ix. 10); but he felt it was essential to their future existence as a nation.

Haggai and Zechariah prophesied during the rebuilding of the Temple at Jerusalem. They urge it on, and exhort the people to repentance; they herald the coming Messiah, the Prince of peace, whose appearance in the second temple was to be its chief glory. Zechariah extends his predictions to the Second Advent, as many of the prophets had been inspired to do before him (see chap. xiv. 1—11), and speaks of it as attended by the conversion of the nations.

Malachi prophecies against fresh corruptions introduced during Nehemiah's absence in Persia. He also predicts the Messiah. His last prophecy concerns the blessedness of those who fear the Lord; and his book closes the canon of the Old Testament Scriptures, 400 years before Christ.

While Nehemiah was governor of Judea the Jewess Esther was raised to the Persian throne; and with her beautiful history the records of the ancient world, as given to us in the Bible, are ended.

When we look back on the whole Story of the Divine Book, we see that it is a history of a *chosen* people taught of God, and chosen to serve HIM and Him *alone*—chosen from a larger human family who did NOT serve the true God, but served their own false memories of Him, and made images of gods to worship from their own vain imaginations. Their natural instinct bade them worship something better than themselves; but "their foolish heart

was darkened," and they set up as gods the symbols of their own worst vices.

These vile examples, as you have seen, God's chosen people, who possessed His Word, yet obstinately and strangely followed, and were in consequence rejected, abhorred, and cast away; *yet not for ever*. They still walk the earth in singular nationality: forgotten or persecuted, massacred or spared, they never die out.

Where is there a nation so old as this nation? With its cradle in remote antiquity, its history has bridged all these centuries; and across this bridge we of modern days alone communicate with ages long gone by. How is this? The Jew folds in his vesture his imperishable Book of the Law and the Prophets given him of God. Those inspired authorities have told his story; and even the science and literature of this advanced era must come to *him* and his old ancestral records when they would seek to illuminate the lately disinterred remains and monuments of the men that were his foes. Babylon and Assyria and Egypt are gone down into darkness —they have perished, but the Jew remaineth; for with him a faith has succeeded to a kingdom.

The book of Esther in our Scriptures may be looked upon as the link between the history of the scattered nation of the Jews and that of the Greeks, whose capital city ATHENS, forms the illustration to our last chapter. That beautiful daughter of Israel shared the Persian throne of Ahasuerus, who is now considered to be the same with Xerxes, the son of Darius Hystaspes who wrote on the Behistun rock.

Of this Persian king there had been a prophecy recorded in the book of Dan. xi. 2. It was uttered in the third year of Cyrus. (See Dan. x. 1.)

"And now will I shew thee the truth. Behold, there shall stand up yet three kings in Persia; and the fourth shall be far richer than they all: and by his strength through his riches he shall stir up all against the realm of Grecia."

The three kings that stood up after Cyrus were Cambyses, Smerdis the Magian, and Darius of the rock inscription. Xerxes the son of the last, was the fourth king mentioned, and his invasion of Greece is the chief event of his reign. It was he "who stirred up all by his riches" against Greece.

Besides the Persians, superbly clad, with lances knobbed with gold and silver, he had in his army Ethiopians clothed in lion skins, Indians in cotton, wandering Scythians, and wild hunters, Medes and Bactrians, Lybians and Arabians.

When he reached the shore of the Hellespont he ascended a lofty marble throne and beheld at one view his fleet and army. At first the show delighted him, but he soon burst into tears, and when asked why—"Because," said he, "before the end of a hundred years all this vast multitude will have passed away."

After fierce battles and many losses, Xerxes did succeed in burning Athens—Athens, whose language and its poet Homer, could win the world's ear from then till now—but the Persian king did not conquer Greece.

As the empire of Judah sank below the horizon of nations, the Greek empire had risen; and ere the Son of God appeared upon the earth, according to the word of the prophets, the dominion of each of the four "beasts" of Daniel had been established; each for its "season and time," Babylon, Persia, Greece and Rome, had in turn succeeded each other, and even for the scattered Jews at Alexandria, it was found desirable to translate for the first time their ancient holy books: The Old Testament (as we call it) from Hebrew into Greek, the language of

Athens, in which the NEW TESTAMENT was written from the first. Thus the Word of God was first given to the Gentile world, whose "times" had been said to commence from the rise of the Babylonian power—Daniel's "head of gold."

Our British city of Edinburgh is called the "modern Athens" from some likeness in its site to that classic city. A magnificent rocky eminence in the centre of each, crowned with grand edifices, commands the surrounding country. Both cities are beside the sea. We shall have more to tell of Athens in the days of Paul. It was then the world's university of learning, but it reached its greatest splendour and power fifty years after its burning by Xerxes. It was then called THE CITY of all Greece.

And here we will part with our readers till we resume the Story of the Book as contained in the New Testament, and as it has gradually spread through the world.

The VERBAL CHRONOLOGY of the OLD TESTAMENT is not difficult to remember in a few great periods.

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	4004	

On the 1st of January, 1869, will be resumed the issue of the NEW TESTAMENT Series of TRACTS and the Story of the circulation of Holy Scripture through the world—which together will form the entirely new edition of "THE BOOK AND ITS STORY."

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ERRATA.

Page 217, erase "Balaam the son of Beor had been slain in this war." (Josh. xiii. 22.)

Page 203, For "The giants Sihon and Og," read "king Sihon and the giant Og."

THE SCATTERED NATION.

"By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down, yea, we wept, when we remembered Zion."

THE TIMES BETWEEN THE OLD AND NEW TESTAMENTS.

No. I.

These times were about 400 years, during which we cannot refer to the utterances of any inspired prophet after Malachi till we are awakened by the voice of John the Baptist, born six months before our Saviour, whose ministry had been foretold as "The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God." It was thus John announced his mission to the Pharisees, quoting the prophet Isaiah, ch. xl. 3.

During this interval of 400 years, however, many of the Old Testament prophecies were in course of fulfilment, and we have to look at the state of the scattered Jewish nation whom you see in the frontispiece, as—

"By the rivers of Babylon they sat down and wept: they wept as they remembered Zion.'

And we must also observe the four great Gentile Powers which had been pictured in Daniel's dreams, and their relation during this period, and before it, to the scattered Jews. You remember that during the Babylonian captivity, the Prophet Daniel was inspired to give to the world, in his *second* chapter and his *seventh* chapter, two pictures of the further events that would occur in the 400 years which were to introduce the kingdom of the Messiah.

The Babylonian "head of gold" passed away at the taking of Babylon by Cyrus, B.C. 538. The prophet Daniel lived on from the time of Nebuchadnezzar to that of Cyrus, and knew of God's personal dealings with both kings, being employed to interpret the Divine will to the former.

It is an impressive record in the last chapter of 2nd Book of Chronicles, recopied in the first Book of Ezra, that—

"In the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, that the word of the Lord *spoken* by the mouth of Jeremiah might be accomplished, the Lord stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and *put it* also in writing, saying,

"Thus saith Cyrus king of Persia, All the kingdoms of the earth hath the Lord God of heaven given me; and he hath charged me to build him an house in Jerusalem, which is in Judah. Who is there among you of all his people? The Lord his God be with him, and let him go up."

This is followed by a command to his subjects to help the Jews with silver and gold, goods and beasts, strengthening their hands as well as by free will offerings.

"Also Cyrus the king brought forth the vessels of the house of the Lord, which Nebuchadnezzar had brought forth out of Jerusalem, and had put them in the house of his gods.

"Even those did Cyrus king of Persia bring forth, and numbered them unto Sheshbazzar, the prince of Judah."

There were no less than five thousand four hundred vessels.

If Jehovah had called Nebuchadnezzar "His hammer," He calls Cyrus His shepherd and His anointed. (Is. xliv. 28; xlv. 1.) Cyrus is mentioned 150 years before his birth, and named no less than ten times in the Scriptures. There is a monument still existing to his honour at Murghab, about fifty miles from Persepolis, of which a Greek author says that within it was once the golden coffin of Cyrus, hung round with purple coverings.

There is no inscription now to be read upon this sepulchre, but there is a pillar in the same village of Murghab with an inscription in the arrow-headed letters, and the very same inscription is found over a singular figure, also at Murghab, which it seems natural to suppose may be a portrait of King Cyrus with fanciful additions. Sir Henry Rawlinson reads it,

"*I am Cyrus the King—the Achæmænian.*"

SUPPOSED FIGURE OF KING CYRUS.

It is the great glory of King Cyrus that by his aid "the foundation of the house of the Lord was laid again in Jerusalem." The children of the captivity, nevertheless, were hindered from building their temple by adversaries, who frustrated their purpose all the rest of the days of Cyrus, and for nearly twenty years till the decree of Darius Hystaspes in B.C. 521, the king who made his records on that great rock of Behistun (see p. 321 of our first vol.) We find afterwards, that by help of the Persian power, not only the Temple, but Jerusalem itself was rebuilt and fortified, and these restorations were complete at the beginning of the 400 years we are about to examine; and at this time the Persian Empire was the first in the world. It was symbolized in Daniel's dream as the breast and arms of *silver*, in the idea of the great image, of which the head had been *gold*.

There was now to follow, a third kingdom of *brass*, which should bear rule over all the earth, Dan. ii. 39; and this was fulfilled between the years 333 and 323 B.C., when Alexander conquered Persia and reigned supreme, not only over Asia, but over a great part of Europe also.

That event had been foretold to Nebuchadnezzar at the time when he, the head of gold, was surrounded with every earthly glory, and while the states of GREECE were scarcely known among the nations of the world. Their free states and cities, independent of each other, were many centuries behind the old empires in wealth, and power, and luxury, and learning. Greece was for ages composed of half-barbarous tribes, strangers to letters: yet afterwards Greece became known, and has been remembered when all before her was forgotten. When Philip of Macedon and his son Alexander

took the reins of her power, in twelve short years Alexander subjected the whole world of the East to his will. This third empire was like a leopard with four wings; it had also four heads, and dominion was given to it" (Dan. vii. 6), which indicated the daring courage and magic celerity of its conquests. The "four heads" refer to the four great divisions into which the empire of Alexander fell soon after his death.

In the eighth chapter of Daniel, the Grecian king is again referred to "as a he-goat, with a notable horn between his eyes." The angel informed the prophet "the rough goat is the King of Grecia." There can be therefore no mistake in applying this prophecy to Alexander.

This he-goat came to the ram with two horns standing on the banks of a river (the Persian power), and he smote the ram and brake his two horns. He cast him down to the ground and stamped upon him, and there was none that could deliver the ram out of his hand. How forcible a description of the impetuous onslaught of the Greek armies, and the prostration of Persia before them. Then comes also the doom of the he-goat.

"When he was strong, the great horn was broken."

A few years after the death of this great Macedonian, all his family were cut off, and his dominion was divided into four portions. One general held Macedon and Greece; a second had Thrace and Bithynia; a third ruled Egypt, and a fourth governed Syria.

How wonderfully does this display the foreknowledge and power of God.

Although, however, the military power of Greece fell before that of Rome, its mental influence did

not; for Greece, in the course of her 500 years, had distanced all other nations in architecture, painting, sculpture, and created a fresh school of beauty moulded after nature—God's own school, which it has been the glory of all ages since to imitate—poetry and history, science and philosophy, she carried to perfection, till Grecian power ruled, and the Greek language and manners pervaded the whole civilized world. Even when Rome conquered her, she imparted her arts and literature to the victors, and thus chiefly enriched those who were to take possession of her power.

It principally concerns us to know what became of the Jews during this period.

We cannot ascertain exactly how far the princes of Judah on their partial restoration to their land, retained their patriarchal authority over the people; but from the time of NEHEMIAH the HIGH PRIEST became the most important person in the State, and four high priests succeeded—Eliashib, Joiada, Jonathan, and Jaddua, who is the last mentioned in the Old Testament, and he lived in the time of Alexander the conqueror of Persia, to whom Jerusalem and all Judea submitted. Alexander granted in return the enjoyment of their own laws and freedom from tribute during the Sabbatic year; he enlisted many Jews as soldiers under his banner, and removed a large number of them to Egypt to aid in peopling his new city of Alexandria, which led to the translation of *their* sacred book into the Greek language.

Seven more HIGH PRIESTS succeeded the four named in Scripture; Onias I., Simon the Just,*

* To Simon the Just, according to tradition, we owe the final arrangement of the books of the Old Testament. He added to Ezra's collection the books of Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther, and Malachi, and thus completed the Canon.

Eleazar, Manasseh, Onias II., Simon II., Onias III., which carries on the line to the time of the cruel Antiochus, the very great enemy of the Jewish nation, whose ferocious outrages called forth those heroes named the Maccabees, about 168 B.C. They liberated Judea for the time being, although their posterity misgoverned it long afterwards, till the Jewish history became closely connected with that of the Roman Empire.

The Jews have never forgotten the cruelties of Antiochus Epiphanes. He was truly "a vile person," and the accounts of heathen historians seem to prove that he answers to Daniel's description of the King of the North (Dan. xi. 21); by the North is intended Syria, which was north of Palestine.

Antiochus caused a general massacre in Jerusalem, which lasted three days: 40,000 Jews were killed, and as many made slaves. He then entered the temple to carry off its gold and silver, and caused swine to be sacrificed upon its altar.

Shortly afterwards, he attacked the city on the Sabbath, when the Jews were forbidden to fight; slew many, and sold more; shed blood within and without the temple; and building a strong fortress on Mount Zion, caused such multitudes to flee, that the city was like a desert; the daily sacrifices were discontinued, B. C. 168; the temple dedicated to Jupiter, an idol placed therein, and only those Jews favoured who worshipped it through fear of death.

Yet even at this time many were found faithful: they would not forget their Law, and change its ordinances.

"Then the wicked king rent in pieces the books of the Law which he found, and burnt them with fire; and whoever possessed copies of these books,

or consented to the Law, it was ordained that they should die; wherefore they chose rather to die, that they might not profane the holy covenant."

"So then, they died." They led the way in the long roll of names, of the martyrs for the Book. Among these, the most distinguished were seven brethren, and their mother, under the Maccabees, who, refusing to disobey the Law of Moses, underwent every possible torment, and were at last fried alive, in a brazen pan made redhot, one after the other, being supported of God, and each singing the words of Moses' Song (Deut. xxxii. 36—43), exhorting one another to die for the truth's sake. The mother entreated each son to be faithful unto death, and last of all she, like them, was tortured, and died also.

In the midst of these troubles, God raised up for His people a deliverer as in old time, Judas Maccabeus, who trusted in the Lord, and in His Name defeated the Syrian armies: then he cleansed the temple, and built a new altar in the place of that which was defiled: all the services and sacrifices were renewed three years and a half after they had been discontinued.

Antiochus soon after this died in dreadful bodily torments, with all the terrors of a guilty conscience; but the Syrians still continued to make war on Judea, and Judas continued to overcome them through prayer, and God being with him as in the times of Israel of old.

It was not in times of trouble that his faith failed. He became very rich, and a prince among the people. After many fresh victories, he grew weary of the further incursions of his enemies; and this Chief of the Maccabees sent to Rome, and sought for help from those who were ignorant of the Living God.

Ere the messenger of Judas returned to bring a promise of help from the Roman senate, he who had sought for other help than God's, was slain, B.C. 161. The failure in faith of this man of God was like that of Jehoshaphat of old; and by the step he took he hastened the ruin of his people. His death was bitterly lamented throughout Judea, as that of the greatest deliverer who had appeared since the days of David.

From the time of the outcasting of the Jews as a *Nation* from Palestine, by the will of God, they became a *Church* scattered throughout the world, distinguished *by the Book they carried with them*, a divine book of laws, and history, and poetry, and prophecy; *and by keeping a weekly Sabbath* for worship, which the nations around disregarded.

There were sacred books in India, said to be written by mythical persons who were often deified heroes. There were the books of Confucius in China—of Buddh in India and Burmah—the Zend-avesta of Zoroaster in Persia, and sacred books in the dead and buried languages of Assyria, and in the hieroglyphs of Egypt. Some of their authors might have seen copies of the scattered MSS. of the Jews: and all contained a certain code of morals; but each one set up some *false* god or gods upon its pedestal, while preserving meanwhile many traditions from the plain of Shinar.

The Persian religion was an improvement on the Assyrian, and at Persepolis were found many remains that threw light on the Assyrian marbles, when disinterred of late, after a sleep of 2,500 years —winged figures like those of Cyrus—representing deified men, symbols of the Supreme God, etc. When Greek art superseded eastern symbols, although the Greeks also had a most varied my tho-

logy, they returned to the worship of Nature, or of the actual forms of God's creation, of mighty men and beautiful women, as their gods and goddesses of War, and Love, and Wisdom; such as Mars, and Jupiter, and Venus, and Minerva. These also the Romans worshipped; and this was the false religion ordained by the masters of the world at the coming of Christ.

The Jewish history henceforth is closely connected with that of the Roman empire.

Pompey, the general of the Roman armies, took advantage of the constant quarrels the Jews had among themselves, to add Judea to his conquests; and thus the fourth of the Gentile beasts of Daniel began to tread down the holy city.

He took the temple by storm; and the Pharisees, who were always fighting against the Sadducees, earnestly helped him. The priests engaged in the daily services were slain where they stood. Pompey entered the holiest place: he saw no visible glory, for it had long departed (Ezek. 10); but he was astonished at finding no image or statue of the Deity. However, he showed his respect for the place by touching none of its treasures; and he ordered it to be cleansed and its services renewed.

He then returned to Rome, entering it in his triumphal, glittering chariot, to which were yoked all the kings he had conquered. He had overcome in that campaign fifteen kingdoms, taken 800 cities, and caused 1000 castles to acknowledge his empire; and he brought back treasure to the amount of five millions of our money. Yet he was only a single general of Rome's armies.

Was not *that fourth beast* "exceeding dreadful" (Daniel vii. 19), with his "teeth of iron and his nails of brass, devouring, breaking in pieces, and stamping the residue with his feet"?

It is as trampled beneath these iron feet, that our own country, Britain, is first brought into conjunction with Judea.

While Pompey triumphed in the east, Cæsar went forth and conquered the west. The people of the Swiss valleys were first subdued, then 80,000 Germans fell before him; the Belgae were defeated with such slaughter, that marshes and deep rivers were rendered impassable by heaps of dead bodies: then he subdued the Gauls, and only looked with the unsatisfied eye of a ravenous eagle (the standard of the Roman empire was an eagle), to the white cliffs of Albion, as he stood upon the shore of France.

He sailed from Calais, B.C. 55, and landed where the town of Deal now stands.

The Britons were even then fierce enough to frighten the Romans; but they could not withstand men clad in armour. We need not give you our own early history, but we must touch upon the ancient religion, such as it was, which prevailed among the Britons before the coming of the Lord.

It was very ancient: its priests were called Druids, as were the priests of the Celtic nations in general.

The Celtic nations descended from Japheth, who peopled Europe, and on whom that blessing was pronounced by his father Noah, "God shall enlarge Japheth, and he shall dwell in the tents of Shem, and Canaan shall be his servant." This promise had not been fulfilled in the times we have hitherto considered. We have led you to the ancient East, but now we shall return to look upon ourselves—the children of the West.

The religion of the Druids was as old as that of the Magi of Persia, the Brahmins of India, and the Chaldees of Babylon and Nineveh.

The corruptions of each, like those of Egypt, arose at first out of the pure religion of Noah; and you will find that the simple primitive customs of the patriarchs of the Bible suffered the least change among the Druids of Britain.

When Cæsar landed on our southern shores, he did not plant his silver Roman eagles in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland. Far out of the every-day world, in the Western Hebrides, side by side with Staffa, the cathedral of the sea, in the great bay of Loch-na-keal, there lay then, as there lies now, the island of Iona, whose oldest name was the "Isle of the Druids."

Here, in times of which we have no written record, were carried on many of the simple religious customs of the old Hebrews: and when Nineveh had carved her vast stone cherubim, and bowed down before her eagle-headed Nisroch, and while Egypt worshipped her Isis and her Apis, in Iona was reared no temple and no image; but the altar of turf or stone, and the offering from the increase of the fold or field, testified to the one God, whom Noah served in the same manner when he came out of the ark. Afterwards Satan, the god of this world, corrupted this simple faith into the earliest of idolatries, and the worship of the sun became the religion of the Druids. There soon followed, as among all other heathen nations, the worship of the serpent. The serpent's egg was the Druid's crest, and the actual serpent lay entwined at the foot of their altars. One of their most remarkable remains is at Avebury, in Wiltshire, where 461 stones once composed the figure of a serpent extending for two and a half miles over the green hills, and serving as approaches to circles within a circle. The head and tail of the snake are still obvious.

In Scotland,—especially in the district of the Garioch, around Aberdeen,—are ancient stones, sculptured with the figure of the serpent, combined with a sceptre; and the same marks are on some of their ancient pillars, as well as on the walls of caves.

It is one of the most remarkable triumphs of that "old serpent the devil," that he has succeeded in persuading fallen man, in every country, and in every age, without exception, to adore that reptile form in which he destroyed the happiness of our first parents.

In the temple of Belus at Babylon, were worshipped large serpents of silver. In Persia, serpents were considered the governors of the universe. The serpent Calya was worshipped in Hindostan, as was the serpent Python at Delphos. Under the form of the dragon, the serpent has to this day governed China and Japan; while the serpent-worship of Syria and Egypt is shown by all the ancient history of those countries. It entered largely into the mythology of Greece and Rome; and in order to separate God's people from this universal serpent-worship, Hezekiah, when he broke the images, and cut down the groves, also broke in pieces even that precious relic, the brazen serpent that Moses had lifted up in the wilderness, calling it Nehushtan, or only a piece of brass, for the children of Israel had burnt incense to it. (2 Kings xviii. 4.)

But to return to the Druids. The proof that their religion in its origin was patriarchal, is to be found among trees and stones.

The oak tree has at one time or other been held in especial reverence by all nations. The same word in Hebrew denotes an *oak* and an *oath;* and a stone placed under an oak was among the Hebrews a monument of Divine covenant.

When Joshua had written the words of the covenant in the Book of the Law of God, he took a great stone and set it up under an oak at Shechem, and said to the people, "This stone shall be a witness, for it hath heard all the words of the Lord." (Josh. xxiv. 25—27.) On this very stone, Abimelech was afterwards made King. (Judges ix. 6.) In earlier days, after Jacob's beautiful ladder dream he took the stone, which had been his pillow, and set it up at Bethel in memorial of the place which had been to him the gate of heaven. (Gen. xxvii. 18.)

Sometimes stones were raised to mark the spot of a victory, as at Mizpeh (1 Sam. vii. 12); sometimes over the grave of a dead friend, as upon Rachel's grave. (Gen. xxxv. 20.) The erect gravestones in our burial-grounds are memorials of this custom; and in 1 Sam. vi. 15—18, we read of a stone rendered memorable by the ark of God being placed upon it, when returned from the Philistines, and taken out of the cart by the Levites, which stone had before been well known as "the great stone of Abel."

The most striking example of a *circle* of memorial-stones being set up, in Scripture, is by Joshua at Gilgal, which word means *circle*. These stones were taken up out of the bed of the river, and pitched in Gilgal. At this place Samuel the prophet afterward held his courts of judgments from year to year; and an altar must have been erected here, for at Gilgal was consecrated Saul, the first of Israel's kings; and here also Agag was "hewed in pieces before the Lord." Gilgal appears to have been the customary residence of the Prophet Elisha.

Those stones told wondrous histories throughout the old Hebrew times; and by no people were these

customs so distinctly preserved as by the Druids. *They*, like Israel, worshipped in groves, at first very naturally seeking intercourse with God under the shadow of ancient woods, and set up memorial-stones generally under oaks, which to them were especially sacred; then, like Israel, and without their written revelation, polluting them by idol-worship, some have said by human sacrifices. There is, however, considerable historical evidence, that the men killed on these stone altars, with one stroke of the sword, were those who, in later ages, would have forfeited their lives, as criminals, on the scaffold. From the posture in which the victim fell, the Druids decided their auguries or divinations.

The circles of stone, called Druidical, are still numerous in Britain, on lofty hills and elevated plains; the most magnificent is that of Stonehenge on Salisbury Plain. These circles are also found in Normandy. They were the temples for worship of our forefathers, open to the sky: the priests stood within the circle, the people without,—a dim shadow of Moses and the elders on Mount Sinai and the people fenced off around its base,—also of the Tabernacle and its inner and outer courts.

The Druids resorted, like Israel, to their place of stones, at all times of important consultation, and sat in their consecrated circles to judge and give laws. In Iceland, these were called *doom-rings*. Sometimes the old stones witnessed the choice of kings amid the songs of the bards. In the very dress of the arch-Druid, there is something that reminds us of that of the high-priest—his rod, in imitation of that of Moses, his robes of pure white fastened by a girdle on which appeared the crystal of augury encased in gold: as this jewel sparkled or grew dim, the person appealing to him rejoiced

or trembled. Round his neck, also, was the breast plate of judgment, said to possess the property of squeezing the neck on the utterance of a false decision.

There were schools of the Druids like the schools of the prophets of old. Iona was their inner sanctuary; and here a training-college for their order existed for centuries. Here also they buried their kings. They seem to have loved island refuges. Mona, or Anglesey, was also their favourite island, and Guernsey and Jersey are full of their altars.

The Romans called the Druids "barbarians;" they called all barbarians whom they considered as less enlightened than themselves and the Greeks: they called the Jews barbarians, even in the times of the apostles. Romans, Greeks, and barbarians were, in their view, the chief divisions among mankind.

Rome, like an immense beehive, did as England now does—sent forth its swarms from time to time into the countries which its legions had subdued. The Romans believed in many gods, but had no objection to add to their own gods those of the people they conquered, so as to reconcile them to their yoke. Such was the idea of the common people; but the learned men, though they seemed to agree with the vulgar, professed among themselves to worship only one god in a great variety of forms.

They constructed systems which they thought very wise, and divided themselves into a great many sects named after their founders, Epicurus, Aristotle, Plato, etc. These sects were always multiplying errors; and whenever any truth is found among them, they had gathered it from the Jews,

who were scattered everywhere, and whom they held in the greatest contempt, as well as the idea of their possessing a Divine revelation.

The Jewish king, Aristobulus, was carried in chains to Rome. The history of the Jewish nation was at this time so full of shocking crimes, that their own historian, Josephus, knows not how to recite it. The Romans divided Judea into five provinces, and appointed governors to each.

One of these governors, Herod, afterward persuaded the Romans to make *him* king. He was the son of Antipater, an Idumean, and he was the Herod who was king at the birth of Christ,—the Herod who killed his own wife, the beautiful Mariamne, without cause, and the Herod who rebuilt the temple—the old building being taken down in parts as the new one was raised. This temple was destined to be more honoured than ever temple had been before. It was very beautiful: it stood on Mount Zion, the open courts around it paved with inlaid marbles, the roof of carved cedar covered with gold, supported by 162 columns of white marble. One of its ten gates was called "the beautiful gate," which was about thirty yards high, made of pure brass: over this gate hung a golden vine, to which the worshippers were continually adding a golden leaf or a golden grape. The roof was studded with golden spikes, to prevent birds from settling upon it. When the sun shone upon this pile of snowy marble, it must indeed have been gorgeous.

The ceremonial service of this temple was, just previous to the coming of Christ, carried out with regularity and splendour. The synagogues, also, or houses appointed for prayer and the reading of the Law, by Ezra, were scattered thickly all over the land.

The whole of the sacred writings were divided

with reference to the synagogue service, so that there might be a portion for every Sabbath.

At the time of Christ, there were more than 400 synagogues in Jerusalem alone. There were in every synagogue some paid ministers, called, in the New Testament, "rulers of the synagogue," who seem to have dealt out judgment for offences against religion and morals. Hence we hear that the Apostles were to be "beaten in the synagogue," and "scourged in the synagogue." (Matt. x. 17; Mark xiii. 9.)

Now let us look at these rulers of the synagogue. They were Pharisees; men who pretended to revere Moses, and to live by his rules, who delighted to dwell on the pomp and splendour of their ancient ordinances, and the glory of their Law, *but who took the liberty of adding to it very much.*

Josephus says, "The Pharisees have delivered to the people many observances by succession from their fathers, (*i.e.* handed down from father to son) which are not written in the Law of Moses."

The Pharisees set up a claim to be more wise and holy than the Sadducees, who said, "Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die." The Sadducees did not add to the Bible, but they took from it *all but* the five books of Moses; and even these they would not believe, if they could not understand them. The Sadducees were something like our modern Broad Church people, while the Pharisees resembled our Papists and Ritualists. There was another sect, called the Essenes, who were so disgusted with both parties, that they forsook the synagogues and the cities, and looking upon the body as the prison of the soul, retired to solitude and hardship, as the monks did in after-time. They refused to marry, lived on vegetables, wore a peculiar dress, and observed almost perpetual silence.

The Pharisees made many additions to the Law of God.

You can see how Rabbi Jonathan had altered the sense in expounding the 53rd chapter of Isaiah—

Isaiah liii.	Jonathan's Targum, or Interpretation.
7 He was oppressed and he was afflicted; yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth.	7 He has prayed, he has been heard; and before he opened his mouth he was accepted. The strong of the people he shall deliver as a lamb for a sacrifice, and as a sheep that is silent before the shearer; and there shall be none who shall open his mouth in his presence, and speak a word.
8 He was taken from prison and from judgment: and who shall declare his generation? for he was cut off out of the land of the living; for the transgression of my people was he stricken.	8 From chastisements and revengings he shall gather our captivity: and the wonderful things that shall be done for us in his days, who shall be able to recite? For he shall take away the dominion of the nations from the land of Israel; the sins which my people have committed, even upon them shall they come.

The eyes of the Jewish teachers were not open to perceive the coming of our Lord *in his humility*. They expected a mighty deliverer and conqueror, and were totally unprepared to acknowledge their Messiah in the helpless babe of Bethlehem.

As they themselves believed, so they taught the people. Jesus called them, when he came, "blind leaders of the blind." Among these, however, there seem to have been a few who, as Malachi says, "spake often one to another," and who were, like Zacharias and Elisabeth, "righteous before God, and walking in all the ordinances of the Lord blameless." These *few* must have rejected the traditions of the Pharisees, and must secretly and

devoutly have studied the sacred writings themselves. They were "waiting for the consolation," and "looking for the redemption of Israel."

The Pharisees were making "the Word of God of none effect by their tradition." This is our Saviour's own testimony concerning them. These men declared that the Word of God was divided into two parts — the *written* and the *unwritten*. Both parts, they said, were given to Moses on Mount Sinai; but he committed the *unwritten* by word of mouth to Joshua and the seventy elders, who again committed it to the scribes, who were to deliver it to the people. These were some of their sayings: "The Scriptures are water, but the traditions are wine;" "The words of the scribes are lovely above the words of the Law."

And the people soon learned to set the authority of their rabbis above the authority of Scripture. The Jews of the present day, it is said, withdraw their children from the Bible at the age of seven or eight; *i.e.*, as soon as the boy's mind is capable of understanding the Talmud.

"Prevent your children," said Rabbi Eliezer, "from reading the word of God too much, lest they should be carried away with it." Alas! alas! that such should be the sayings of Israel, the chosen people! Thus they became almost as ignorant of God and of His truth as were the pagans around them—all, excepting the small remnant kept faithful by the grace of God, who neither added to the word nor took away from it, and who were, doubtless, saying in their hearts, "It is time for thee, Lord, to work, for they have made void thy Law," when Simeon and Anna welcomed the Holy One once more to his Temple, and by the revelation of the Holy Ghost proclaimed him as a "light to lighten the Gentiles," as well as the "glory of his people Israel."

BEBEK ON THE BOSPHORUS.

THE GOSPELS OF MATTHEW, MARK, AND LUKE.

No. II.

At the time of the birth of our Lord, the whole Roman world was at peace, and the temple of Janus shut. No remarkable event attracts our attention to any other part of the earth at the time John the Baptist came crying in the wilderness of Judea, "Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight."

John was a noble young Jew, of about thirty years of age, who appeared in the deserts. We may imagine him in his rough raiment of camel's hair, as of striking and powerful presence, with unshorn black locks and beard, and the flashing dark eye of his nation, crying, "Repent ye; for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." He wrought no miracles, displayed no supernatural power, yet seemed a most unearthly being, raised up by God for the time, and in harmony with the place.

Genuine and deep piety always impresses the common people, and the words of John set thousands of consciences to work that before were slumbering. Slothful, luxurious Jerusalem, sleeping in its sins, arose in one day, and went out to be baptized of John in the Jordan.

God might have sent His prophet into the city, but he was the man for the desert. His ministry had all its influence *there*.

"Prepare ye the way of the Lord," said he; "make his path straight." The Jehovah of Sinai,

the God who made the worlds, was coming to make a royal progress; to walk through the cities and villages of Judea; not as one of the silken rabbis of Jerusalem, with flowing robes and haughty air, but choosing rather the common seamless robe of a carpenter, woven from the top throughout, in which to teach the people the Truth of which he was himself the author.

On the slopes of that long line of mountains which run down the land of Palestine, once the strongholds of the mighty Rephaim, crowds thinking of their sins were now gathered. They broke away from their customary occupations in Jerusalem, to throng around this strange preacher of the desert, where, with eager expectation and awakened minds, thousands of them listened to the voice of him who cried in the wilderness, "Repent ye; for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." It seems that even the hardened conscience of King Herod himself was awakened by the preaching of John: "Herod feared John, knowing that he was a just man and a holy, and observed him; and when he heard him, he did many things, and heard him gladly." (Mark vi. 20.)

Now let us mark the great Pharisees and Sadducees approaching the Jordan, and see what a fierce reception *they* met with: "Oh, generation of vipers! who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?" They talked about Abraham being their father, but were as unlike Abraham as possible.

The great cedars of Judaism!—they were cut down, being full of all manner of unclean birds; and great was the fall of them. Their boughs were all scattered about the world, as they are to this day: the axe of the Lord was laid to their root,

for they had not given glory to the King of kings but had perverted His most Holy Word.

Then, behold the humility of John the Baptist! "There cometh one mightier than I, whose shoe's latchet I am not worthy to unloose." The ministry of the forerunner John was rejected by the proud Pharisees, and they afterward denied the Son of God himself, and put Him to an open shame.

With the coming of Christ the age of the world began again. The first 4,000 years of man upon the earth were ended, for this is supposed to be the right and exact number, rather than 4,004 before Christ. And again we begin with what is called the first century of the Christian Era.

On the acts and revelations of this first century, it has pleased God to fix the eye of all true believers ever since. The deeds and sayings of all *after* centuries derive their importance only from their connection with *this first*, because that alone was the century in which *more* mighty pillars of miracle and prophecy were reared to support the Church of Christ, than even those which lent their Divine strength to the Church of the wilderness, and of the Promised land.

So the Lord came to His own, but His own received Him not; yet He was a light to lighten the Gentiles—and truly their darkness needed it: they worked the works of darkness, and were in the power of the devil, who led them captive at his will, and who dared to say to the Saviour himself, that He held "all the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them;" but "the Son of God was manifested that He might destroy the works of the devil." (1 John iii. 8.)

Christ's revelation of himself and His designs, even to His chosen few, was very gradual,—"as

they could receive it." Not by many, at first, was He really believed to be the Son of God. John the Baptist was one who specially witnessed to this, and Nathanael, and afterwards Peter. (Matt. xvi. 17.)

Our Lord had chosen but twelve Apostles. The commission He gave to them was to follow in His steps. They were to preach the gospel, the good news of His coming into the world; and He also gave them power to heal the sick, to raise the dead, and to cast out devils, in His name, as a witness to the truth they preached.

These men, gifted with more than human power, were to be the fathers of the Church of the New Testament. Afterward He appointed other seventy also, (Luke x. 1, and to them gave the same miraculous gifts. *Their* number was the same as that of the elders among the Jews, who went up with Moses to the mount.

In the hour when He partook of His last supper with His disciples, and dispensed to them the bread, which was the image of His body to be broken for them (1 Cor. xi. 24), and the wine, which was the image of His blood shed for the remission of their sins (Matt. xxvi. 28), He drew the infant Church into the nearest and tenderest communion with Himself: He told them, that as the world hated *Him*, so it would hate *them*; that the servant was not greater than his lord; therefore, that the time would come, when whosoever killed them would think they did God service; and that if any man would come after Him, he must deny himself, and *take up his cross* and follow Him (see John, chapters xiii. and xvi.). This oneness in suffering with Him was to prepare them for being one with Him in His glory.

After the crucifixion and ascension of the Re-

deemer into heaven, the four Evangelists, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, inspired men, as were the prophets of old, committed to writing those particulars which the Holy Ghost saw fit should be preserved, concerning the ministry of their Master, for our benefit. Luke then recorded their own acts and missionary travels. Paul, the converted persecutor, and attendant at the first martyrdom of a Christian (that of Stephen), wrote fourteen letters to the Churches which he had founded, while James, Peter, Jude, and John, completed the New Testament canon.

Some of these books are called by Paul the New Testament (see 2 Cor. iii. 6), while he refers to the Mosaic dispensation as the Old Testament.

The different Churches formed by the apostles in the first century received these books by degrees, and each Church gradually obtained them *all*. Among the various opinions entertained concerning the person who finally collected them together, the most natural seems to be, that this was done by the Apostle John, whose life was long preserved by God for the comfort of the Church. He was nearly one hundred years old when he died, and was himself inspired to utter the magnificent prophecies of the last portion of the Sacred Scriptures.

Let us now see how the four evangelists, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, were each taught by the Holy Ghost to write the history of their Divine Master. These histories were all called "Gospels," and the word gospel means "good news"—the "good news" of salvation for sinful men by the death of the Lord Jesus on the cross for their sins. Matthew, Mark, and Luke, often relate the same fact, but relate it in a somewhat different manner.

When friends meet together to read Holy Scripture, it will often be well for them to take some fact thus thrice related, and note what particulars *each* Evangelist adds to the whole story, and when such facts are brought together the result has been called a "harmony." The writers upon the Gospels in modern days have been almost without number. One of these has given us a beautiful thought that is easily remembered, viz., that

MATTHEW speaks of Jesus as the SON OF ABRAHAM.

MARK as the SERVANT OF GOD.

LUKE, as the SON OF MAN, or of ADAM.

And JOHN, as the SON OF GOD.

The same writer considers that we are not to look at each Gospel as *merely* filling up or confirming what is said in another Gospel—for that this is only a *secondary* purpose in the presentation of the life of Christ by four persons ; but that each Gospel contains a revelation of the Lord in a distinct point of view, and that because each Evangelist fixed his attention on a separate phase of the same Divine character.

In fact each Gospel is God's own history of His Son seen in different lights, and the fourfold form in which it is given us is no accident. We must reverently seek its meaning and the teaching of the Holy Ghost concerning it, remembering that it is utter foolishness to attempt to judge the meaning of God's word—except by the teaching of the Holy Spirit; but "the secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him."

In the Old Testament Books we have already traced the history of a peculiar people ; the Gospels and Epistles will show us that there is a further meaning in their history, and therefore it must still be held up as the study for present generations.

We hear of Israel, once the *chosen* of God with all her faults and sins now cast off, and scattered throughout the earth; *rejected* by Him who chose them; and yet still in possession of a Book in its original language, which tells all about their past and their future.

This Book we Gentiles also now possess, each in our own language; and the more modern portion of it which Israel rejects, was nevertheless handed down to us and written chiefly by men of their own race, by whom we are informed that Israel in the flesh only prefigured *another* chosen people, chosen individually from *all* kindreds and nations, and peoples, and tongues, the spiritual and world-wide Israel of God.

In Galatians vi. 14—16, Paul renounces any glory (though he was an Hebrew of the Hebrews) save in the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ,

"In whom neither circumcision (the national mark) availeth anything, nor uncircumcision, but 'a new creature' ('being born again') and as many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God."

The division and order of the Books of Moses have given *us* who can look back upon them from Gospel days to see in each one a particular aspect of the position of this spiritual Israel. God having gradually revealed Himself to man by little and little, as he could bear it, "at sundry times and in divers manners," first in shadow or type, and then in the person of his Son.

Paul saw in Hagar and Sarah what prophets and seers before him could not have seen. In the book of GENESIS we may trace what comes forth for Adam, and that whether it be good or bad, a Cain or an Enoch, there must be redemption for it, and this can only be by the blood of the Lamb; so in

the book of EXODUS a chosen people are brought out from Egypt by the blood of the Lamb. In LEVITICUS we have this chosen people being taught the way of access to the Redeemer and His mercy-seat in the sanctuary. The book of NUMBERS shews us the wilderness of this world in which we are pilgrims from the house of bondage to the Promised Land. DEUTERONOMY marks a second giving of the law to us as by Christ, and the desire of the people to exchange the wilderness for the better land, answers to the desire of the elect of God to know the power of Christ's resurrection, and live with Him even now "in heavenly places."

The book of JOSHUA shews Canaan reached by passing over Jordan.

It may be truly said that every instructed Christian has felt this "progress." He sees and enjoys in Scripture what the unbeliever never can discern, and yet how far short does *our* discernment fall, of the view of angels and of those who have passed within the vail; we see it, but at different distances and from different stand points, and this brings us again to the different stand points of the four writers of the Gospels. Each one saw Jesus, and had his eye fixed upon his Lord; but each depicts Him in a different relationship. Matthew was a Jew and a publican, by birth an Israelite and an official of the Roman Empire. He was accustomed to think of the vast and universal kingdom of Rome, and he sees Jesus as connected with another kingdom, as a Son of both Abraham and David. His Gospel is often called "the Gospel of the kingdom."

Then comes the mighty contrast. MARK (John Mark) was a servant of the apostles whom Paul saw to be "profitable for the ministry," and *he* sees Jesus by inspiration of the Holy Ghost, "in the form of a

servant," and presents to us with especial sympathy the particulars of His Divine Master's *service.*

LUKE, a Gentile, is the friend and companion of Paul the Apostle of the Gentiles, and he traces the genealogy of his Lord to ADAM, and shews Him forth as the "Son of man." *He* sees Jesus, not so much as a King or as a servant, as one of Adam's children, and presents Him *to all mankind.*

JOHN, who was permitted to come nearest to the Divine heart on earth, sees Him as the SON OF GOD, come down to die the death of the cross, that He may draw a heavenly people upwards to sit with Him on His Father's throne.

So each Evangelist is used by the Spirit of God as an instrument of which He knew the precise power and tuned it to full harmony for an instructed ear, in a history, of which fleshly wisdom can perceive little, any more than it did concerning the Lord Himself, for when upon earth it saw "no beauty in Him that He should be desired."

MATTHEW.

It is not quite certain in what language the Gospel of Matthew was at first written, whether in Greek or in Syro-chaldaic, which means Syriac Hebrew, the common tongue of Palestine, that in which our Saviour spoke when hanging on the cross.

"Eli, Eli, lama Sabachthani."
"My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me."

The earliest writers who quote this Gospel, do so from the Greek copy of the apostolic age, but recognise it as a translation. One thing is very obvious, that the Gospel of Matthew was especially written for Jewish converts, for it always appeals to the prophets; he says continually,

"Now all this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet," (chap. ii. 15.)

"Thus it was written by the prophet," etc.

The second and third chapters are full of these allusions. This mode of teaching would not originally have been addressed to Gentiles, by whom the allusions would not have been understood. The whole story is told in a Jewish way; Jesus is announced as the MESSIAH "which was for to come." The genealogy commences with Abraham our father, and descends to David the king. It is Matthew who tells that wise men came from the East to Jerusalem, saying—"Where is he that is born King of the Jews?" He records that the people were amazed when the blind and dumb both spake and saw; and said, "Is not this the Son of David?" He also tells that the Pharisees declared,

"This fellow doth not cast out devils but by Beelzebub the prince of the devils." (Matt. xii. 23.)

Here was their unpardonable sin. We see from the context it was the sin against the Holy Ghost; and behold Jesus turns away from unbelieving Israel, and says, that "whosoever doeth the will of His Father in heaven, the same is His brother and sister and mother." Then comes the unfolding of the mystery of the kingdom which should be brought in by the rejection of the Lord; Christ came seeking fruit on His fig-tree and found none. And Matthew writes as an eye-witness of the kingdom that arose in the stead of that of Judah.

The teaching of our Saviour was distinguished from mere ethical or moral teaching, by a deeper love and sympathy; it was not only law according to Moses—

"An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth;"

But

"If a man ask thee to go a mile, go with him twain."

It added a right emotion to a right law, and altered the motive of observance from fear to love. It looked at things as before God who sees in secret, rather than merely as according to law ; it introduced a new principle, "Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, overcome evil with good."

Christ said Himself "that He was not come to destroy the law, but to fulfil." The whole Gospel of Matthew is full of one meaning: this fulfilment of the law, and of all the prophecies of the Messiah in the person of Jesus Christ. He makes sixty-five references to the Old Testament, and quotes its words forty-three times. Luke refers to it in forty-three passages, and quotes its words nineteen times.

"John the Baptist came preaching the kingdom of heaven, and the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins." And Matthew goes on to reveal this kingdom of heaven, for Israel's kingdom is in ruins. Israel is now to repent and be buried in a mystic grave, and the true heir comes in, though she slew him, he has risen again, and the vineyard is let out to others. Then heaven is opened and the Spirit descends in the form of a dove, and the voice is uttered, "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased, hear ye Him." Mark and Luke both tell of this, as well as Matthew, for the baptism of the Spirit was needed alike by our Lord in all His aspects, as a King or as a servant, or as the Son of man.

Matthew refers thirty times to the kingdom of heaven in his Gospel, and righteousness is always a mark of its subjects. Three times only he speaks of it as "the kingdom of God."

The Sermon on the Mount begins with the kingdom of heaven. This sermon was an especial gift of the Spirit to Matthew, for by no other evangelist is it so fully given.

The chief things in this Gospel may be classed under twelve heads.

I. The introduction to the ministry of Christ, chaps. i. to iv.

II. The laying down of the new law for the Church in the Sermon on the Mount, chaps. v., vi., vii.

III. The events of Christ's life as a worker of miracles, chaps. viii., ix.

IV. The appointment of Apostles to preach the kingdom, chap. x.

V. The doubts and opposition excited against it, chaps. xi., xii.

VI. A series of parables on the nature of the heavenly kingdom.

VII. The effects of His ministry on His adversaries and on the common people, chaps. xiii. to xvi.

VIII. The revelation to His disciples of His future sufferings, and instructions to them thereupon, chaps. xvi. to xviii.

IX. Events of a journey to Jerusalem, and what transpired there, chaps. xxi. to xxiii.

X. His last discourses, chaps. xxiv., xxv.

XI. His passion and resurrection, chaps. xxvii., xxviii.

XII. His commission to His disciples to teach all nations.

But we must pass on from the King to the Servant, as described in

THE GOSPEL OF MARK.

The second Evangelist deals with the same material—the Lord's life on earth, and we may be taught by the things that are *omitted* in this Gospel, as well as by those which are *recorded*.

In Mark there is no genealogy, no account of the miraculous birth, no reference to Bethlehem, no in-

fancy, no childhood, no reference to pre-existence in divine glory. Mark comes at once to *service*, and straight to the details of *ministry*. He has no sermon on the mount, no giving of the new law, no divine form of prayer, no lengthened discourses, few parables. The book is narrative, rather a history of doing than teaching, of toiling, serving the needy, healing the sick. The Redeemer is not represented as the King of heaven, though with authority commandeth He the unclean spirits, and suffereth not the devils to speak. Here is no arraignment of the Jewish nation, no sentence passed as by a Judge upon Jerusalem, but He sits over against the treasury and watches the poor widow casting in her two mites. The servant of God has an eye for service, He appreciates the unseen spending of the last farthing, and pronounces that this widow has cast in more than they all.

In the garden there is no reference to the twelve legions of angels whom He might have summoned according to His will as in Matthew. No promise of the kingdom to His dying companion, no notice of the saints who rose out of the open graves when Christ arose in the power of His resurrection, and went into the holy city and appeared unto many.

Never do the disciples call Christ "Lord" in this Gospel, only "Master." The purpose of this Evangelist seems to be to place before us a vivid picture of the earthly acts of Jesus. Precise and minute details as to persons, places, and numbers, abound in the narrative, all tending to give force and vividness to the picture of the *human* life. The minute painting of the scenes in which the Lord took part, the fresh and lively mode of narration in the present tense rather than the past, the very absence of the precious discourses of Jesus, make us perceive that

it is a Gospel of action, and has a peculiar character of its own. Its motto might be those words of Peter—

"How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power; who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil: for God was with him."

Mark gives a series of acts in this conflicts broken by times of rest and refreshing, in the wilderness or on the mountain.

The principal divisions in this shortest Gospel are—

I. The baptism of Jesus by John the Baptist.

II. The acts of Jesus in Galilee.

III. His teaching in Capernaum concerning the spirit of the new kingdom of the Gospel.

IV. Teaching, trials, and sufferings in Jerusalem.

V. The crucifixion.

VI. The resurrection.

Mark seems to have been a nephew of Barnabas, and the opinion of the early Church always associates him with the Apostle Peter. It was to the house of the mother of Mark that Peter came after his miraculous deliverance from prison, when many were gathered together praying, and Mark may have been converted by Peter, for he speaks of "Marcus my son." (1 Peter v. 23.)

Anxious to work for Christ, he went out with Paul and Barnabas as their minister, but at Perga, perhaps dismayed by their difficulties, he turned back; so that on the second journey Paul would not accept his service, though his kinsman Barnabas being more indulgent, he was the cause of a sharp contention between the apostles. Still this did not for ever separate him from Paul, as we find him by the side of that Apostle in his first imprisonment at Rome.

Ancient writers with one consent made Mark the Evangelist, the interpreter of the Apostle Peter, which may either mean that Mark may be the translator of his Syriac discourses into Greek, or more probably that Mark wrote a gospel which conformed more than the others to Peter's preaching. It is evident that Mark travelled with the Apostles, and knew all that they said about Christ. He was a younger man than they; he had not himself gone about with Christ. We find him last with Peter. (1 Peter v. 3) whose private secretary many suppose him to have been. He tells the wondrous story of the transfiguration, tells especially of the scenes in which Peter is an actor, tells the rebukes he received, tells all about him. His gospel seems chiefly to have been addressed to Gentile Christians. One beautiful peculiarity of this Gospel is that Mark, especially as a servant, watched the eye and the hand of the Master. It is so often recorded, "Jesus *looking* upon him said—Jesus *looking round* said, when He had *looked round* about upon them in anger He *took* the children in His arms—and blessed them—He *took* Peter's wife's mother by the hand and lifted her up—He sighed"—He "sighed deeply." He made Himself a servant.

Let us especially, as the servants of God, study this *gospel of service.*

LUKE.

The contents of the Gospel of Luke are as follows:

I. A preface.

II. An account of the time preceding the ministry of Jesus.

III. Several accounts of discourses and acts of our Lord, related much in the same order as by Matthew and Mark, and relating to Capernaum.

IV. Accounts referring to a certain journey to Jerusalem.

V. The sufferings, death, and resurrection of Jesus.

VI. Account of events after the resurrection.

St. Luke throughout writes very broadly and plainly the memoir of Christ as "the Son of man," as linked not only to a certain kingdom of the Jews, but to all the sons of Adam; and in this gospel we have also, men as they are, set side by side in strong contrast with man as he should be, the man Christ Jesus.

From the preface of this gospel we learn that there were many narratives of the life of Christ current when Luke undertook his own, and the word "many" cannot apply to Matthew and Mark only; it is evident that Luke believed that he had been empowered by the Holy Ghost to write in their stead, having also the previous fitness of a perfect understanding of all things from the very first, and an ability to record them "*in order*" in the form of a narration to his friend Theophilus, to whom he also dedicates the book of the Acts of the Apostles.

This friend Theophilus appears to have been a Gentile reader, and the gospel is therefore suited to Gentile readers—readers at a distance from Palestine—and who would therefore need to have detailed *in order* the events one after another as they had happened; the position of places would have to be minutely described in relation to each other, to such a stranger to the locality, and this is done with Capernaum, Nazareth, Arimathea, the country of the Gadarenes, and the distance of Olivet and Emmaus from Jerusalem. Theophilus may have been an inhabitant of Rome, for the places in Sicily and Italy are not thus described. Syracuse and Rhegium,

Puteoli, Appii Forum, and the Three Caverns, are named as to one likely to know them. The genealogy of Jesus is traced beyond Abraham up to Adam so as to connect Him with the whole human race, and not merely with the Jews.

Luke describes the mission of the *seventy*, which number has been usually supposed to be typical of all nations, as *twelve*, the number of the Apostles, represents the Jews and their twelve tribes. He gives, not so much the discourses of Jesus as His conversations: with the remarks of those present he opens his gospel as if beginning a simple tale. "There was in the days of Herod a certain priest." Then follow all the circumstances of the birth and the infancy of the Holy Child, and of John the Baptist His forerunner. Here, and here only, do we find the three inspired songs, which for ages have been the chosen utterance of the world-wide Church, the song of Mary, the song of Zacharias, and the song of Simeon. Here only is the preaching of the Baptist to men of every class recorded, and that the people asked him, What shall we do?

And the publicans, What shall *we do?*

And the soldiers, What shall we do?

Is not the time returning *now*, when to every class of men is delivered the same message—"Repent and be converted, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand"?

Is it not a time when the love of Jesus is shewn forth to all who will listen to it? and how fully is it declared in the simple words of the gospels! We get from Luke, the story of the infancy of the Child, how He "grew," how "the grace of God was on Him," how at twelve years old He went up with His parents to the feast at Jerusalem, how He tarried behind, and His mother knew it not; how He

went down again and was subject to His parents; these points are peculiar to this gospel, and mark how the Lord personally entered into man's lot, and joined Himself to us in birth, in childhood, and in youth, that He might in His own holy person bring men at all ages near to God.

This gospel gives a glance over the world. Tiberius Cæsar is reigning at Rome; Pontius Pilate governs Judea; Herod is tetrarch of Galilee; and two high-priests of Israel are named, Annas and Caiphas, who perhaps were fulfilling the office by turns.

A very marked account is given of our Lord's opening ministry. Matthew and Mark both say, "Jesus went into Galilee and began to preach," but Luke tells us full particulars. He came to Nazareth where He had been brought up ("bringing up" is a part of man's lot) and in the synagogue on the Sabbath-day He stood up to read the Scripture which described Himself as the Anointed man.

> "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the Gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord."

And here our Lord "closed the book," and gave it again to the minister, and sat down. Had he proceeded with the prophet (Isa. lxi. 2) he must have read,

> "And the day of vengeance of our God."

But He was not *come at that time* to declare vengeance, as He will one day come *again* to a world in which there is no faith, see Luke xviii. 8, and shall then feel what is "the wrath of the Lamb," when "all that have hated Him shall flee before Him, and shall say to the mountains, Fall on us, and hide us, for the great day of His wrath is come, and who shall be able to stand?"

Our Lord closed the book, and fulfilled His mission only as the Son of man, while all eyes were fixed on Him. Still they said—"Is not this Joseph's son?" and then He goes on to tell them that although He had announced His *Divine* mission to them, yet He knew that no prophet was accepted in his own country, and that like Elisha of old, He should next go where He was sent of God; and He tells them that Elisha went to two Gentiles, the widow of Sarepta, and Naaman the Syrian; at which they rose up filled with wrath, and led Him to the brow of their hill to cast Him down headlong; but He passing through the midst of them went His way, "His time was not yet come." Then going into Capernaum the screaming devils owned His power, and confessed His Name, while men denied it; but He rebuked and suffered them not to speak, for they *knew* that He was Christ; and soon again He preaches in the synagogues of Galilee.

It is in Luke that we hear the most of the prayers of our Lord to His Father: prayer adds to the perfectness of the picture as MAN. At His baptism He was praying; when He cleansed the leper, He withdrew Himself, and prayed; He chose the Twelve after a night of prayer. The Transfiguration happened as He prayed. He was praying when the disciples asked Him, "Lord, teach us to pray." In Luke only have we the words to Peter—"I have prayed for thee."—thus shewing what becomes the sons of men in all their work. It is often mentioned by Luke how he ate meat. He is a social man. He dines with the Pharisee, and watches those who chose out the best places at the table. He here repeats much of the teaching which Matthew gives us from His public and set sermons. Our last remark is, that it is in Luke's Gospel that we have allusion to

the TIMES OF THE GENTILES. Here only do we read of "Jerusalem being trodden down of the Gentiles," and her people being "led away captive into all nations," chap. xxi. 24; and the place of crucifixion is here called by the Gentile name "Calvary" —not as in the other gospels, "Golgotha."

We have given as a frontispiece to the present chapter a view of SMYRNA, the *old* city of which had been in existence long before Christ's coming, and a city of that name is in existence *now*. It is mentioned in the Book of the Revelation as the seat of one of the FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCHES, to which Christ sent epistles, among the Gentile nations, (see Rev. ii. 8 to 11.) A new Smyrna was built by the design of Alexander the Great, but not till after his death. It was a very important city, the natural outlet for the produce of the whole valley of the Hermus; and here the Olympian games were celebrated in the times of the apostles. Among its gay and drunken population, the first Christians testified, in "tribulation and poverty;" and Christ bade them, by the Apostle John, fear none of the things which they should suffer. The first bishop of Smyrna, Polycarp, was martyred there. It is one of the few ancient cities that have survived to our times; and we have for several years had one or two Bible women, under American lady-missionaries, in the villages that skirt its bay. Here they sow the good seed of the Turkish Bible, and it springs up; for the women say, "Why does our Imaum keep us ignorant of these truths? We have souls, and we ought to know more of this Holy Book.

THE ROOF OF THE WORLD.

THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES, AND THEIR EARLIEST EPISTLES.

No. III.

It is said that some teachers on the continent of Europe have recently declared that the Old Testament is "not fit to be put into the hands of children and young people in schools."

One would think that these people still lived in the dark ages, and had no knowledge of the light which the travel of modern days is casting year by year on the changeless scenery of the ancient East; on the lands in which and about which the Old Testament was written. From month to month our men of science in our various newspapers tell us of some new discoveries in the deserts of Sinai, on the banks of the Euphrates, or the Jordan, or among the underground ashes of Jerusalem, that have no value or interest to us in the Western world, but for the pages of that oldest of old books which is to be put out of our children's way. Alas! the modern Jews, whose fathers were its faithful librarians, now only give it to their children till they are eight years old, and for whom they do not object that it should have the fascination of the grandest of story books; but after their childhood they are passed on to the traditions of the elders and the endless errors of the Rabbis. They acknowledge no New Testament of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ: for "He came to His own, and His own received Him not."

Let us however leave it to Jews, to Romanists, and Rationalists, to *hide* God's ancient Book, all whose contents led on towards "Jesus the Light of the world;" and let *us* only be concerned better to understand it through the inspired explanations contained in the narratives and letters (or Epistles) of Evangelists and Apostles. We have begun to look through the great telescope of the New Testament on what we had been learning from Moses and the prophets; we shall find that there is too little leisure in the longest life to examine a tithe of the treasures which God has given to all men in His heavenly word.

We have begun to see Jesus and His life on earth through the records of three of the Evangelists; through Matthew, who beheld the King come to His kingdom; through Mark, who sets Him forth as the meek and lowly servant of God; and from Luke, who sets in order the wondrous history of our Lord as "the Son of man," and writes for all mankind.

Now, instead of coming at once to the *fourth* Gospel of John the beloved disciple, who shews forth our Saviour especially as the "Son of God," we will reserve this last gospel to be studied with the three short letters written by the same hand, and with that wonderful closing book of THE REVELATION of Jesus Christ; which John says the Lord sent and signified to him, and concerning which a particular blessing is pronounced on him that readeth it.

In the present chapter we will pass on to the beautiful narrative called in our Bibles—

THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES.

The main purpose and true subject of which is, *to shew the fulfilment of the promise of the Father, by the descent of the Holy Ghost, and the results of that outpouring in the diffusion of the Gospel among Jews and Gentiles.*

This book shews us the rise of Christian Churches through the teaching of the Apostles first in the Holy Land, and then in the Eastern and Greek provinces of the Roman Empire, which the Jews thought of first when the "Gentiles" were named.

Luke, the beloved physician and author of the *third* gospel, was inspired to write this his second book (also addressed to the individual named Theophilus); but he does not himself call it the Acts of the Apostles, neither does it give a history of the Apostles generally. There is a list of their names in the first chapter.

Peter and James and John.
Andrew, Philip, and Thomas.
Matthew and Bartholomew (supposed Nathanael).
James the son of Alpheus.
Simon Zelotes and Judas the brother of James.

But only the first three or four are afterwards mentioned. The whole number being assembled together, heard the last words of their Master, and beheld till He was taken up into heaven and a cloud received Him out of their sight. They then obeyed His last command *not* to depart from Jerusalem till they had received the promise of the Father, the baptism of the Holy Ghost, by which there came upon them *power* to be witnesses to Christ "in Jerusalem and in all Judea and in Samaria and to the uttermost parts of the earth."

The witness of PETER for his Lord, at all risks, then becomes as marked as had been his former denial of Him. The fearful disciple is now a giant in faith; the power of the Holy Ghost is upon him. It is Peter who stands up in the midst of the disciples; Peter who lifts up his voice to the men of Judea, declaring who it is that "with wicked hands they have crucified and slain."

Peter, who on that glorious day of Pentecost brings 3,000 souls who had received the word to His Master's feet; Peter, whose very shadow heals the sick, and who with John, being cast into the common prison, is delivered by an angel who says to them, in defiance of all priestly hate—

"Go stand and speak in the temple to the people all the words of this life."

The power of the Holy Ghost is upon them, "confirming the words with signs following."

The institution of deaconship is then recorded, and the deacons were to be full of the Holy Ghost and of wisdom. Stephen, who was one of these, worked miracles; and we are reminded that the serving of tables, or attending to the temporal needs of the poor, requires equal grace, and being filled with the Spirit, as the offices of preaching and of prayer, for equal temptations to self-exaltation beset both. We next hear of the martyrdom of Stephen, one of the first deacons; and at once Saul, a young Jew, who has assisted at that martyrdom, is called of God, even while he was "breathing out slaughter" against all the disciples; he is at once, by the mighty power of God, added to their number, "a chosen vessel it is said," to bear My Name before the Gentiles.

Again for three chapters of the Acts, the 10th, 11th, 12th, the history of Peter is resumed, and that of Philip is given, going down into Samaria and preaching Christ and "the people with one accord gave heed to those things which Philip spake." Peter raises Dorcas, preaches to Cornelius, and receives a vision concerning the Gentiles, which shews him the way of access is open *to them also*. Herod again imprisons him, and once again the angels

break his chains: so the word of God grew and prevailed till the Holy Ghost said—

"Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them, both at Jerusalem and at Antioch."

At each of these places existed a Council of Apostles and elders to consider questions that arose in the early Christian Churches, and to introduce fresh teachers to their work; "The disciples were called Christians first at Antioch." The Church of Antioch having fasted and prayed, laid their hands on Paul and Barnabas and sent them away on their important missionary tour, and now sixteen out of the twenty-eight chapters of the Acts are taken up by the story of Saul of Tarsus changed into PAUL the Apostle of the Gentiles, the accomplished Greek scholar reasoning in the synagogues, and "persuading both the Jews and the Greeks," "strengthening all the disciples," teaching in the school of Tyrannus, and expounding the way "of God more perfectly unto the Gentiles," so that *in two or three years* "all they which dwelt in Asia (Minor) heard the words of the Lord Jesus." (Acts xix. 10.)

It was acknowledged (Acts xix. 26) that

"Almost throughout all Asia Paul had persuaded and turned away much people, saying that they be no gods which are made with hands."

This was his message to the *heathen* world, while to the Jews in their synagogues he continued witnessing

"Both to small and great, saying none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come."

Thus confirming as the Lord Jesus Himself had done "the truth of all that Moses had written," in his walk with the disciples to Emmaus after His resurrection. It was Christ, no other than "God manifest in

the flesh" who had "begun at Moses and all the prophets, and expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself," and to follow in His steps He had selected Paul "to bear His Name among the Gentiles."

And how had this been accomplished? By a personal, individual, miraculous, call. As Saul one day approached Damascus, he was encircled by a light from heaven, in the midst of which he had received the tender reproach which touched at once his fierce and cruel heart.

"Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?"

In that supernatural light it was given him to see Jesus, and the sight subdued him in an instant. Trembling and astonished, he cried—

"Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?"

And then he was led blind into the city, and continued praying, and unable to eat or to drink, till Ananias, (of whom all we know is that he was a "devout" Jew and had become a disciple) is sent of God, as he says by the Lord Jesus, to open the blinded eyes, and bid the great Apostle of the Gentiles receive the gift of the Holy Ghost, and there fell from his eyes as had been scales, and in his own words "he looked upon the face of Ananias,"—saw in him for the first time a Christian brother. He is then baptized, and straightway preaches in the synagogues, "confounding the Jews and proving that this is the very Christ."

The history of Paul is not brought down to his death even at the close of the book of Acts; but the space included in the narrative comprises the periods in which all his letters were written to the Churches he had founded, and which forms so large and instructive a portion of our New Testament.

There are also four short Epistles to the Church of Christ in general, one from James, the Lord's brother; two from Peter, and one from the Apostle Jude. All of these, with Paul's letters, appear to have been written between the year 55 A.D. and the year 66, therefore before the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus the Emperor of Rome.

If we examine the subjects of these apostolic letters we may perhaps be able to discern a divine order and progress in the Epistles as well as in the Gospels; of special truths announced by Paul and James, Peter and John, as the Church needed them, and received to this day as the heart of believers is prepared to apprehend them by the Holy Ghost.

Augustine says, marking the difference between Peter and John, that Peter tells of the life which is by faith and conflict; John, of the life which is by vision of Christ.

Paul's truth appeals to the intellect, it is the first side of truth, gives the first aspect of the application of the heavenly mysteries of the Old Testament in the kingdom of Christ. For one comment upon John's epistles we have twenty on those of Paul, for his epistles are addressed to the intellect. And what should we do without PAUL, who satisfies us on every point as to the grounds of faith and doctrine?

Then what should we do without JAMES and his teaching on good works as the fruits of faith; the good works of self-government and bridling the tongue; the good works of patience, and sufferance, and endurance, and care for the poor?

And what should we do without the epistles of PETER, once so hasty and self-confident, but ere he wrote these so advanced in his humility "through sanctification of the Spirit" and in true greatness of

soul, that he had adopted Paul's conclusions concerning social intercourse with the Gentiles, though submitting himself the elder apostle to the heaven-taught wisdom of the younger?

In his first epistle, sent to the Churches of Asia Minor by Silvanus, a faithful brother, he comforts and strengthens the Christians under severe trial, (his Lord had said to him, "When thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren,") enforces the practical duties, family and personal, to which they are spiritually called, and warns them against the special dangers attached to their position; he tells them they will only *grow* spiritually by taking of the "sincere milk of the word," and shows them how to walk as pilgrims and sojourners through an evil and reproachful world.

Especially does he set forth CHRIST as their example, bidding them *rejoice* to be partakers of His sufferings, and in this exhortation he includes the presbyters and teachers, whom he exhorts never to be lords over God's heritage. The wondrous words of inspiration that were given to Peter endure to this day, which is a special characteristic of all Holy Scripture, and often seem written as fresh private epistles to every converted soul.

In the second epistle of Peter, which those who have not been taught of the Holy Ghost to receive it have often dared to doubt as authentic, there are many signs that in his ripening age this apostle had been taught of God, all the deeper truths which were the peculiar inheritance of John and also of Jude—"the exceeding great and precious promises" which concern a day yet future even to us.

While he continues to establish the disciples in "present truth," chap. i. 12, and recounts afresh

the glory and majesty of Jesus in the flesh, and of his ministry witnessed unto by a voice from heaven amid terrible threatenings to the servants of corruption who shall have known the way of righteousness and not continued therein; he further alludes to the hidden mysteries of that future glorious "day of the Lord" which shall usher in the new heaven and the new earth "wherein dwelleth righteousness." How weighty are the last five verses of his last chapter! the end of which is—

"But grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To Him be glory, both now and for ever. Amen."

And what should we do without JOHN, to whom so much more was committed concerning the final hopes of the Church than even to Paul or Peter; but we will not intrude on the subject of a future chapter, but for the present look at the state of the world in which the epistles were being written, and then close with some further comment on the first of those written by Paul.

These predictions of suffering for which our Lord prepared His disciples, were, according to the New Testament, and subsequent history, literally fulfilled to most of those who listened to them. In the first onset of danger "they all forsook Him and fled,"—they could not, as He said to Peter, follow Him then, but they did "follow Him afterwards."

To Peter himself our Lord said, "When thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldest not. This spake He, signifying by what death he should glorify God." (John xxi. 18, 19.) Accordingly we learn from the very general tradition of antiquity, that Peter was crucified at Rome, under Nero.

James was "killed by the sword," by Herod, the king, at Jerusalem. (Acts xii. 1, 2.)

We have not the evidence of Scripture confirming the violent deaths of the other apostles and evangelists; but early Christian writers say that Paul was beheaded at Rome, under Nero, from anger at the conversion of his favourite cup-bearer. Dr. Cave, and other historians, have mentioned the early traditions that Andrew suffered death in Achaia, James in Palestine, Philip in Phrygia, Bartholomew (or Nathanael) in Armenia, Thomas in India, Matthew in Ethiopia, Jude in Persia, Simon Zelotes at Jerusalem, Mark at Alexandria, and Luke in Greece.

Ere these things happened to them, they were, as St. Paul tells us, "counted the offscouring of all things"; "troubled on every side"; "persecuted but not forsaken; cast down but not destroyed"; "always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus"; "alway delivered unto death for Jesus' sake; beaten, stoned, in hunger and thirst, in cold and nakedness, in stripes above measure, in prisons frequent, in deaths oft." (See 1 Cor. iv. and 2 Cor. iv. and xi.)—Nothing could have supported them steadfast under these trials, but that rich effusion of the Spirit, on the day of Pentecost, which had caused them to perceive fully that the same Jesus which was crucified was both Lord and Christ. Paul received this knowledge afterwards by a special revelation to himself, "and straightway preached Jesus in the synagogues that He is the Son of God." Such was the history of the apostles. The New Testament comes down to us through a line of crowned heads,—but their crown was the crown of martyrdom.

The first pagan persecution against the Christians was raised by the emperor Nero, about thirty years

after the crucifixion. This is mentioned by the great Roman historian, Tacitus. He says, that "Rome being set on fire, Nero declared it was the work of the Christians, and put great numbers of them to death after frightful tortures." Other heathen writers mention the Christians as being "punished with the troublesome coat," which was made like a sack, of coarse cloth, besmeared with pitch, wax, and sulphur; and, being dressed in this coat, they were hung by their chins on sharp stakes fixed in the ground, and then burnt—

> "In that pitched shirt in which such crowds expire,
> Chained to the bloody stake and wrapped in fire."

Nero had them burnt at midnight, as he said, "for torches to the city." This persecution lasted for three or four years, and spread through the Roman empire. An inscription dug up in Spain shows that the Gospel had already penetrated that country, and that the Church there had her martyrs.

In the reign of Nero, Suetonius was sent into Britain, and attacked the Druids in their strongholds in Mona. He caused many of them to be burnt in the fires they had prepared for their expected captives, and destroyed their groves and altars. St. Paul was sent to Rome, according to Eusebius, in the second year of Nero, that is A.D. 56, and he stayed there, according to Luke, two years. The British prince Caractacus, and his father Brân, were sent to Rome in the year 51, and stayed there, as hostages, for seven years. It is said, in the Welsh "triads," that Brân was the first who brought the Christian faith to the Cymry or Welsh. He had, therefore, in all probability, received it from Paul at Rome: thus early came the pure Gospel to Wales. It is said that Brân brought back with him three Christian teachers,—Illtid, an Israelite;

Cyndaf; and Arwystli, which is Welsh for Aristobulus, to whom Paul sends salutation, Rom. xvi. 10.

Tacitus likewise informs us that London at this time contained many merchants and much merchandise.

How unlike was the London of which he speaks to our London! Its very pathways were different; for traces of Roman floors and highways are found twenty feet below our present streets. There is little doubt that the Romans brought in their train, from the large family of Christian brethren in Rome, some manuscripts of the Gospels, some teachers of the Story of Peace among those men of war; and that there would be hymns sung to Jesus Christ in some corner of the old Roman town. Christianity, through the labours of the apostles, had taken deep hold of the people in the south of Europe; and many flourishing churches were, as we know, established in Greece.

A person asked Apollo how he should cause his wife to relinquish Christianity. "It is easier, perhaps," replied the oracle, "to write on water, or to fly into the air, than to reclaim her. Leave her alone in her folly, to hymn in a faint, mournful voice, the praises of the dead God, who publicly suffered death from judges of singular wisdom."

We have space only for a brief notice of the dreadful destruction of Jerusalem by Titus, A.D. 70. The Jews having refused the usual tribute to the Romans, he came to enforce it. The city and temple were burnt, and the ground ploughed up, for the purpose of obtaining the precious things buried in the rubbish. The wicked Jews had said, "His blood be on us and our children," *and it was so.* Never was destruction of any city or people so terrible. A hundred thousand were sold as slaves to the neigh-

bouring nations; multitudes were transported to the mines in Egypt; and more than a million perished by famine and sword, by pestilence and crucifixion. Only those among the Jews who were believers in Christ were prepared for this final breaking up of their national glory and the visible splendours of their temple—having learned that the priesthood of Christ took the place of all other priesthoods, and rendered utterly useless any further ceremonies or sacrifices at Jerusalem.

They had no "continuing city," but they sought one to come. The epistle of Paul to these Hebrews is full of consolation, especially suited to their sorrowful hearts.

In the year 81 occurred the Domitian persecution, during which Christianity appears to have been carried to Scotland by some of the disciples of the Apostle John. These persecutions, of which there are said to have been ten, were always the means of scattering still more widely the seed of the Word. Wherever Christians were driven, they were sure to take some portions of their Scriptures with them. No historian, like Tacitus, celebrated their heroic sacrifices and secret escapes. Heroes and statesmen have their records here; the saints, on high.

The first century, as we know, stands alone in its enjoyment, for three years and a half, of the public ministry of Him "who spake as never man spake," and was Himself the Living Word.

Jesus related a parable (Matt. xii. 29), in which He declared himself as come to take possession of a house, and of the things in it: this house was the world, and the things in it were the souls of men.

As the Redeemer of the world He had come to rescue these precious souls from Satan's power. He

compares Satan to the strong man who was in the house, and who tried to prevent the Saviour from entering in. He said, he must first bind the strong man, and then he would spoil his goods.

This He came down to earth to do by suffering death in His mortal body: and He is still engaged in releasing captives day by day from the power of Satan; and the day shall come when He shall lay hold on that "old serpent the devil," and bind him a thousand years (see Rev. xx. 2), and then indeed "He shall spoil his goods."

The life and actions of our Lord and of His Apostles are, perhaps, better known by most Christians than any other parts of the Bible. And yet there is always more and more in them to study as we are enabled by the Holy Ghost, than in any other part of Scripture!

The first century was alone that in which the persons lived, who were *inspired* to record Christ's sayings; and the living teaching of inspired persons must have been very precious; but it could not have been continual. The apostles were all missionaries. They went forth into all the world to plant Churches, and seldom stayed long in one place. The Gospels and Epistles were only *in course* of writing,—not written, and gathered together till the close of the century,—therefore very few Churches and still fewer individuals were in possession of more than separate manuscripts.

The Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke, were not written, as Mr. Horne thinks, till about the time of Nero's persecution, A.D. 62, and these, with the inspired Epistles or letters to the already founded Churches, became eminently necessary to check the errors and heresies which, *even then*, as the apostles themselves state, had arisen in them.

As we looked in the books of Kings and Chronicles, for the times of the prophets and the subjects of their prophecy, so on the platform of the book of Acts we must look for the times and occasions of the Apostle Paul's letters, as far as they can be ascertained.

Paul wrote fourteen Epistles. We must name them, not exactly as they stand in our Scriptures, but one after another in *the order of time.*

First Epistle to the Thessalonians.
Second ,, ,, ,,
First Epistle to the Corinthians.
Second ,, ,, ,,
Epistle to the Galatians.
,, ,, Romans.
,, ,, Philemon.
,, ,, Colossians.
,, ,, Ephesians.
,, ,, Philippians.
First Epistle to Timothy.
Second ,, ,,
Epistle to Titus.
Epistle to the Hebrews.

1st and 2nd Thessalonians.

In coming to Paul's *first* letter, you will ask who were the Thessalonians. You may read in Acts xvii. 1, that Paul and Silas and Timothy came to Thessalonica, the Roman capital of Macedonia, now called Saloniki and still a great city, built on a slope bordering down to the Egean Sea.

Sometimes in those old cities, the Jews had only a place of prayer by the river side, but here they had a synagogue, and the Jews to this day

form half the population of Saloniki; their number there is 35,000 and they have 36 synagogues.

It was in this city Paul "laboured day and night" for his own bread, perhaps in making hair cloth for tents—which was his trade, every Jew being taught a trade—nevertheless on the Sabbath day he opened his message concerning Christ, sometimes with much contention; but the result was that "many turned *from idols* to serve the living God," which could only have been said of Gentiles; and what he said was received "not as the words of man, but as the words of God." It is remarkable that in neither of the Epistles to the Thessalonians is there one allusion to the Old Testament Scriptures; this does not look as if they were mainly written to Jews. Paul and his friends were before long driven away by a tumult to Berœa; thence he went to Athens and Corinth, where he received a favourable report of those who had believed in Thessalonica, and yet there were blemishes in their character. There was a tendency to fall back to the immoral habits of the heathen world, some want of brotherly love; and a great mistake concerning those who had fallen asleep in Christ, as fearing that they should not share in the glories of His coming again. To all this, Paul's first letter replies. It was the first time he preached the Gospel by his *pen*, or *at least* the first specimen that has come down to us.

The Second Epistle, written at some little distance of time, deals with the same great subject of the coming of the Lord. The Thessalonians are enduring affliction, and Paul gives this to them as a sign that God is preparing them for His kingdom. Some among them however were walking disorderly, being busy-bodies. He warns them that the "apostacy" must intervene before the Second Coming, which they were

erroneously expecting would be immediate; wherein he speaks the language of the Holy Ghost to the Church through all centuries since, respecting what she must go through before the great and dreadful day of the Lord. The probable date of the Thessalonians is between 52 and 54 A.D.

1st and 2nd Corinthians.

We find that Paul remained at Corinth for the space of eighteen months. The Lord had shown him in a vision that he had much people in that city; his next journey is to Jerusalem, visiting Ephesus by the way, and returning thither for three whole years, and from Ephesus he wrote his First Epistle to the Corinthians. Ephesus and Corinth were two great mercantile cities on opposite sides of the Mediterranean Sea. The journey between them has been compared to that which steam power now renders the voyage between Liverpool and New York, about eleven days' distance.

The Apostle's second visit to Corinth was made "in heaviness" from the unworthy behaviour of some of the Corinthians; he was humbled among them from the self-indulgence of some who had professed to believe yet had fallen into fleshly sins, —"the besetting sins of the place." The matter of this Epistle is very various, and introduces us as it were behind the scenes of the Apostlic Church; we see it in the light of its daily life, meeting in an "upper chamber" in the house of a Gaius or an Aquila, when perhaps the heathen hearer is just pierced to the heart by the Christian teacher, the secrets of his conscience are laid bare to him, and he is constrained to worship God. And thus we may continually marvel at the inspiration of the

Holy Ghost who caused Paul so to exhort and regulate such a small community, *as at the same time* to lay down principles of eternal obligation. The sins of the Corinthians have caused the sacred laws of moral purity to be established throughout the Christian world, and *their* denial of the resurrection have caused words to be written whereon repose in a later age our sure and certain hope of immortality.

The Second Epistle to the Corinthians seems to have been written on Paul's voyage to Macedonia. It was after a question of his apostolic authority, and a lapse into error of the Corinthian Church. This Epistle reveals what manner of man St. Paul was, when the fountains of his heart were stirred to their depths. In the First Epistle the faults and difficulties of the Corinthian Church are before us, and are dealt with firmly, but affectionately. In the Second he writes as one whose personal relations with those addressed had undergone a powerful shock; not only against moral delinquency, but giving testimony of his power to deal with it, and he says—"I write these things being absent, lest being present I should use sharpness according to the power which *the Lord hath given to me* to edification, and not to destruction;" and here we see what sustained him in his needful self-assertion. He knew that he did not preach himself, but Christ Jesus the Lord.

This Epistle being forwarded to Corinth in the spring, seems to have been left to do its work, and then to have been followed by a visit to Corinth of three months, during which the Apostle wrote the wonderful Epistle to the Romans, and he says—"I must also see Rome."

It is probable that some converts from all nations would meet in the early church assembled at Rome,

who had gained their knowledge and faith in Christ on the occasion of the first Pentecost. To these Paul writes, and the providence of God had appointed that he should tarry two whole years as a prisoner among them. There is no Scripture record that either Paul or Peter founded this early church, but in thinking of that great capital ruling far and wide over the Gentile or HEATHEN world, Paul had evidently been musing on the exceeding moral wickedness and profligacy against which he was commissioned to reveal the "wrath of God" and the "power of God unto salvation" from it.

Daniel's figure of the great image had been realised; the Babylonian "head of gold" had passed away, and the Persian "breast of silver;" the Greek limbs "of brass," were under the dominion of the "Roman iron feet," and they had "subdued all things;" but Paul knew that the "little stone" of Nebuchadnezzar's dream had begun to smite the image upon the feet, and break them to pieces, and that it should some day become a great mountain and fill the whole earth.

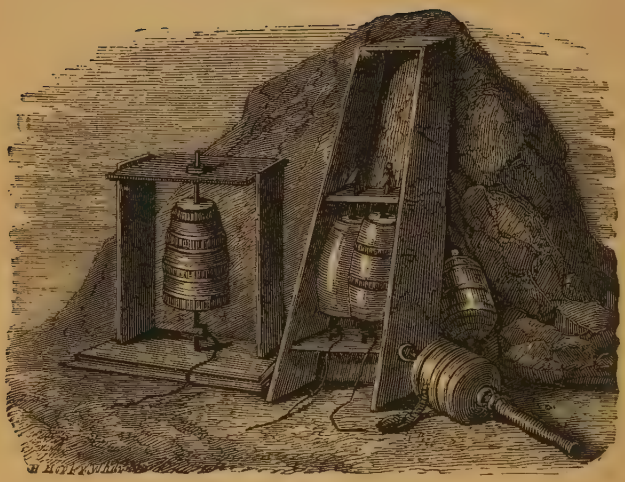
This has not yet been fulfilled, for ours is still only the dispensation of the witness, and alas! we must still look forth on the vast tracts of HEATHENDOM, though not from the Apostle's stand-point at ROME.

What is the picture at the commencement of our chapter? It is a scene on the high plateau of Tibet in Central Asia, above which the giant Himalayas rear their snowy crests 12,000 feet, and which the natives call "The roof of the world." Long before the rise of even Pagan Rome, long ere Europe had risen into importance, the table-land of Asia was the highway of the world's commerce, by caravans. These high plains were the nurseries of the wandering nations; the men of tents, not of cities. They

still send the wool of the shawl goat over the mountain passes to be woven in Kashmere, carried on sheep's backs—the tall black-faced *huniya* sheep which can carry a burden of twenty-four pounds; they bear salt, sulphur, tea, gold dust, sugar candy, and sun-dried apricots, to meet the merchants of indigo, opium, tobacco, copper, tin, iron, paper, spices, brocades, coloured leather, and shawls. The riches of India have always ascended to the heights of Tibet by the passes of the Himalaya mountains.

We have named this plateau of Pamer, which is also the cradle of the noblest rivers of Eastern Asia, to fix attention upon it *in another way*. If we could in Paul's time from this point have looked down on the moral and religious state of the surrounding countries, we should have seen that the god of this world had fixed among those icy pinnacles his darksome throne, and maintained it almost from the time of the Flood.

Over all Ladak and Tibet, over Burmah, Siam, and China, *eastward*, over Japan, Ceylon, and the valleys of Nepaul and Affghanistan *southward* and *westward*, over the deserts of Mongolia and Tartary *northward*, we should have found 500 millions of people professing religions called Buddhism and Brahminism, ignorant of Jehovah and His revelation from heaven; and from Paul's time to ours, this is still the centre of heathendom; there are recent breaks of gospel light on the landscape, the doors of the dark ages are at last unclosing, but the Churches of Christ have very feebly entered in. Yet it is written—"I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance." Before we watch the first spread of the Gospel in the West now called Christendom, let us think of the vast districts of the East, which then, as now, lay almost undisturbed in the thick darkness of HEATHENDOM.



THE PRAYER WHEELS OF TIBET.

THE APOSTLE PAUL: HIS LIFE AND LETTERS.

No. IV.

We left our readers in our last chapter to take a wide survey of the spaces of the so-called Heathen world of Asia. The Greeks and Romans were the Heathen of Europe, with all *their* boasted learning and civilization.

Israel of old, as Moses did, called all nations "Heathen" who had not received the statutes and commandments of the Lord. "Save us, O God, and deliver us from the heathen," said David in his psalm of praise before the Ark. (1 Chron. xvi. 35.) We hear throughout the Old Testament of the "abominations," the "filthiness," and the "rage of the Heathen."

Our Lord Himself spoke of them but once, "and it was by an injunction not to imitate their prayers." "When ye pray, use not vain repetitions as the heathen do." The priests of Baal in 1 Kings xviii. 29, cried, "Oh Baal! hear us," from morn till eve —but it is written, "There was neither voice, nor any to answer, nor any that regarded."

Another striking example of their vain repetitions is found to this day—as it was in the days of the Apostles, on that same high table land of Tibet, the throne and centre of heathendom, for which there is yet no Bible; and where they have found a way of printing their prayers and

offering them up by the turning of a prayer-wheel by millions in an hour.

They make a kind of paper from the bark of the spurge-laurel, and print upon each sheet 130 "repetitions" of one sentence—

"Om mani-pani om."

Which means, "Oh may I be absorbed into Buddh." Buddh is said to be a supreme and self-existent Being into whom all souls shall hereafter pass. Buddhism seems to have borrowed from the Brahmins of India its belief in the transmigration of souls. In both India and Tibet men expect, when they die, to pass, if wicked, in the body of some lower being—a brute or an insect; therefore, they are reverent towards every form of life, lest a beetle for instance should contain the spirit of an ancestor. And the Buddhists believe that every effort of man, during this mortal life, should be directed towards an escape from the necessity of passing into another body—to a release from individual existence, and to a return to lasting union with the Divine Being. This induces the perpetual prayer,—"Oh, may I be absorbed into Buddh,"—which is written everywhere, in streets, squares, houses, on all the flags that float from the summits of the public edifices —and, besides this, is constantly diffused by Lama sculptors, who, maintained by rich and zealous Buddhists, ever travel, chisel and mallet in hand, over hill, dale, and desert, engraving the same six syllables upon the stones and rocks.

The images of Buddh usually represent him as sitting cross-legged, in a meditative posture, and meditation is considered the most certain way of arriving at likeness to him.

But to return to the repetitions. Four sheets

of the papers with the 130 sentences as above are pasted together, and 10,000 of them, so pasted, are put into a prayer-wheel to make a large "*mani-pani*;" and this being turned round twice in a minute, the people suppose that in one hour are offered 624 millions of prayers; in a day 14,976 millions; and they also believe that, according to the number of prayers thus offered, is the degree of holiness attained by the devotees who place them in the wheel, even while they are eating, drinking, and sleeping.

Smaller prayer-wheels than this, called Tchu-Kors, may be found in every brook in Tibet and Tartary, left to be turned by the waters; in every tent, hung where the draughts of wind will keep them going; within the temples, and in niches outside the temples, where each passenger may give them a turn as he passes by. Sometimes, whole rows of these praying-machines are kept revolving by the breeze, like windmills; and, as if this were not enough, at the entrance of every town and village is found what is called a "mani," a kind of causeway, generally from four to six feet high, roughly built up of the stones that lie around; its flat, or slightly sloping roof, covered with pieces of slate, on every one of which a Lama has been asked to write, "Om mani-pani om." Sometimes this "mani" is half a mile long. If a childless man wishes for a son, the traveller for a safe return, or a shepherd for the safety of his flocks, he deposits his prayer-slate on the "mani," and is sure that his prayer will be heard.

Now the Apostles of the New Testament had to teach the world a new lesson about prayer—that it is an offering up of our desires to God for things lawful and right, with an humble confidence to obtain them *in the name* and for the sake of His be-

loved Son Christ Jesus. Even Moses and Solomon, David and Isaiah had asked no blessings in this name. Even to John and His own disciples the Lord said, (see John xvi. 24), "Hitherto ye have asked nothing in My name. Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in My name He shall give it you;" and in that name who could ask anything evil or impure?

From the time then that the disciples—immediately after the ascension of their Master—continued with one accord in prayer to God, till the gift of the Holy Ghost came upon them with a baptism of fire, they went forth pointing men ever to this "new and living way of access" to the Father *through His Son*, whom the heathen did not know, and to this hour *that only way* is open for Jews and Gentiles of all lands. They are all the banished children of Eden, wandering far from God, and even a second time from the plains of Shinar; fallen creatures, banished and in exile, who do not naturally hear or see God, the true God; a thick curtain has dropped between HIM and *them*, and many among them have no desire to see Him. Other things fill up their time and thoughts.

The greatest men of the old world, in the sight of heaven and its angels, were those whom God had caused and permitted to have communion with Himself—*not* the Nimrods, the Pharaohs, the Nebuchadnezzars, the Sennacheribs, and the Alexanders—*they* were His "hammers" and His "scourges"; nor even the heathen sages and poets of Persia, or Greece, or Rome, whose names and laws led nations. They were wise and exalted themselves above their fellows; as Confucius in China, as Zoroaster in Persia, and Solon in Greece; but "the world by wisdom knew not God."

It was Enoch who walked with Him, and Abra-

ham who believed in Him, and Moses and the Prophets whom He drew into His presence, and by His Spirit gave them to utter the words that should never die; first to *one* chosen nation, but by the death of His beloved Son, made free to all the earth; for He had willed that at the *name of Jesus every* knee should bow, and in high heaven *that* alone has power with the Father, and prevails.

This is the power the heathen world had not and has not now; for "how should they believe on Him of whom they have not heard?" But think of the privilege of all who *have found Christ*, and in His name can "draw nigh" unto the Father; and to whom He has said, "*Whatsoever ye ask* IN MY NAME, *believing*, *ye shall receive.*"

We have learned always to close our prayers with the solemn words, "*for Christ's sake*, *Amen*"; but how few of us daily realize their power? Is this, too, become a vain repetition? What has each of us wrought in this name already? Let us not only close our prayers with it, but begin them. In the name of Jesus alone can we enter the Presence. We take in our hand all the promises. Then what may we not obtain? "All things are yours," says Paul. In that NAME we may get all sin subdued in us, and every lust crucified, we shall have everything on earth we need and all in heaven; all our sorrows will be borne for us, and all our joys sanctified. He will not even deny us the souls of men. In His name we may turn them from darkness to light, and though silver and gold we may have none to carry to the poor and wretched, we have THE NAME in which if they believe "all things are theirs."

Now this is the gospel Paul taught. The message of the great salvation, and the one way of access, was the same to all the Churches he planted.

Let us see how he goes on to tell it in *ten* more of his letters, which you remember were fourteen in all.

It is from Corinth that Paul writes to the GALATIANS and to the ROMANS. Corinth was a great city on the isthmus or narrow neck of land between the Egean and Ionian Seas: poets called it "The Bridge of the Sea." On this isthmus was a mountain rising up 2,000 feet, on which was built the citadel, commanding a magnificent and extensive view.

Across the Eastern Sea, at forty-five miles' distance, lay the citadel of Athens, and to the West the snowy heights of Parnassus. Corinth had grand harbours on both seas, and was the universal market of the Greeks, who held there "a perpetual fair." In our days a railway spans the isthmus and connects the oceans.

Perhaps from Ephesus or Macedonia, but more probably from Corinth, during his winter sojourn, Paul addresses the Galatians, who were the Gauls or Celts of that day, a restless wandering people, who had 300 years before Christ been famous for making incursions on their neighbours from the west of Europe, and had even sacked and plundered Ancient Rome. They afterwards overran Asia Minor, in the centre of which they settled; and among them was scattered a great many exiled Jews. Cæsar conquered the Gauls, and the Roman historians describe their inconstant, vain, and quarrelsome character; and they are said to have been extremely superstitious, practising the orgies of Cybele, "the mother of the gods."

But Paul preached the glad tidings in their country, and they had welcomed him as an angel of God. The cities of Galatia are not mentioned, and the Christian churches were it is most likely

scattered among the villages of that patriarchal people.

The suggestions and exhortations of Paul's letter refer to many of the characteristics of the Gauls and Celts, whose descendants are now known as French, and Irish, and Welsh people; his reiterated warnings against strife and vain glory seem directed against their fierce and passionate self-assertion; his very expression, "If ye bite and devour one another" will recall the angry gesticulations and menacing tones of these (by nature) irritable and exciteable races. Amongst them, however, the glad tidings of a Saviour had done much until hindered by the persuasions of Judaizing teachers, who were great thorns in Paul's sides, and who had not themselves comprehended the "liberty wherewith Christ," by Paul's teaching, had "made the Galatians free." He complains of their acceptance of "another gospel," of mere Jewish rites and ceremonies. They were falling away from the simple doctrine,

"Jesus Christ has done it all."

Upon which the whole epistle is a comment; and they had forgotten Paul's apostolic authority, received, as he says, not from man, but "by the revelation of Jesus Christ."

Grave moral faults had followed on their fickleness of faith and departure from sound teaching, bitter dissension and even licentiousness are mentioned.

The letters of Paul it is thought will naturally form themselves into various groups, each of which is pervaded by the same tone of the Apostle's mind, and which seem to have been written under similar circumstances.

The second letter to the Corinthians, and those to

the Galatians and the Romans, appear to be bound together in this way. In each there is the same vindication of his apostolic power, in each the same arguments on the relation of Christians to the ceremonies of the law, and in each a similar note of the sins of the heathen to be avoided. (See 2 Cor. xii. 20, 21; Gal. v. 19, 21; Rom. xiii. 13.) Let the reader refer to them all.

In the letter to the Galatians Paul quotes or alludes to the book of Genesis four times, of Deuteronomy three times, of Exodus and Leviticus each once, besides a Psalm of David, and a saying of the prophet Habakkuk. He argues against the Judaizing teachers by maintaining an *allegorical* sense of their law, viz., that certain events and names in the Old Testament history have *beneath* the facts recorded, *spiritual* meanings, and are parables of Christian truth. (See Galatians iv. 22 to end, and its reference to Isaiah liv. 1; Genesis xxi. 9—13.)

It has been remarked "that the lesson to be drawn from this whole passage in Galatians," which things are an allegory—"as regards the use by Christians of Old Testament Scripture is of an importance that can scarcely be overrated."

After this the letter draws to a close, and Paul says—"Ye see how large a letter I have written to you with my own hand," or as many read it, "In how large letters." He is speaking not of the length of the Epistle, which is short. This is the beginning of his usual autograph postscript, and the large letters may have been owing to the weakness of eyesight, which had probably followed on his blinding vision, and concerning which he speaks gratefully to the Galatians, iv. 14, 15.

"My temptation which was in my flesh ye despised not, nor rejected . . . If possible ye would have plucked out your own eyes and have

given them to me." May we not suppose that this weakness was his "thorn."

The Epistle to the Romans.

While Paul was earnestly praying that he might have a prosperous journey to come to those "called to be saints" in Rome, the providence of God was about to lead him there in a very different way to that which he himself proposed. Meanwhile he addresses to the Roman Church one of the grandest of his letters, being a great manifesto of the "glad tidings" of salvation for all the classes that were gathered together in the Imperial city, in which he declares—

"I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ; for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek."

Man must first be made to see that he has no righteousness of his own, and then follows the terrible description in plain words of the fearful state of the Heathen world, which other writers of that time confirm. This sinful profligacy was always under Paul's eye, and he saw the beginnings of God's judgment upon it.

"Tribulation and anguish upon every soul of man that doeth evil."

But the Apostle looks not only on the wickedness of those who were *without* the law, but on the Jewish people; the chosen ancient Church claiming to be the only righteous, and meanwhile *un*righteous. He sees those two great divisions of mankind, and declares Christ's righteousness to be the only remedy for *both;* the only way to the pardon of God, the only recipe for "newness of life."

Let us mark the description of the conflict between the old and the new man which the watchful

Christian realizes in Romans vii.—and in the viiith. chapter the consoling truth that condemnation has passed away for those who are "*in Christ*," and that the law of the Spirit of Life has set them free from the law of sin and death.

Then follows a disgression from verse 18, which has been a continual comfort to those who mourn over the suffering and decay to this day evident in God's creation. The passage shews that these shall only set in relief a *future glory* in which all creation shall share; and even now, nothing,—no present or future evil, no power in heaven or earth can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord. Here is the root of "rejoicing in tribulation," this is why Christians have been able to do so from that day to this. If they would know the strength with which Christ can support them, they must come into fellowship with His sufferings, and unless they "suffer with Him they cannot reign with Him."

It has been remarked that the ixth. xth. and xith. chapters of the Epistle may be looked upon as the finish to the Book of Acts. Paul there gathers up the substance of all the ancient promises to his nation, and prophesies their final and yet future restoration to the favour of God.

The rest of Paul's letter to the Romans consists in wonderful and practical counsels to Christian unity and gentleness, and kind messages to Christian friends. He evidences the same respect for social order, the same tenderness for weak consciences, and the same expectation of the Lord's coming again, which appear more or less strongly in all his letters. He makes no less than forty-five quotations in this letter to the Romans from the Old Testament, chiefly from the Psalms and from the prophet Isaiah, but many from the Books of Moses.

This chief of the Apostles had four sides to his social character; He was a *Jew* by birth, a "Hebrew of the Hebrews," yearning for the salvation of Israel, and a *Greek* in his education and language, well fitted by his culture to present the Gospel to the Greeks; he had an honest pride also in his *Roman* franchise, and longed as a "free-born" citizen of Rome to tell of Jesus to the Romans; and he was also above all a *Christian*, a follower of Christ, and he was empowered to commit to writing a large portion of those comments on the laws of the New Kingdom which have been the unfailing guide of all Christian Churches from that day to this.

We do not find in the New Testament any history of one Church governed by one body, even in the days of inspired apostles, but we do find this great Apostle Paul ruling independently among the Churches he had formed, and by his letters entering with them into every detail of Christian life. What a code is given in the marvellous 12th chapter to the Romans! "His letters," said the Corinthians "are weighty and powerful, but his bodily presence is weak and his speech contemptible."

The weight and the power came from God, and it still remains in these inspired letters, and *will* remain when all other codes and creeds shall have passed away. "Here are the words that lay down doctrines, argue out the faith, prescribe practice, regulate worship, and pass judgment;" and if men had never departed from them to set up themselves and their own systems and forms of words instead, perhaps the world would have been saved from half its errors.

"The Jewish Christians were extremely shocked by what they considered lawless revolution in the character of Gentile Christianity—jealousy and dis-

cord were abroad—and the apostles held a council at Jerusalem to consider it, but there is no trace of supreme power as assumed by this body. Paul went to Jerusalem to explain his actions, but not to be judged of others. He owns no authority of the other apostles; he had his own revelation of God;" he had been sent to the Gentiles and taught of the Spirit concerning *them*, and he has left us the records of his experience for all time.

What wonderful power is in this book—the Bible! It was written in a language now called "dead," in a state of society now since passed away. It is not a book of mere statements of philosophy but of facts and letters and conversations, all bearing on the present as well as the past, and which all may more or less understand, "he who runs may read." It is full of OBVIOUS senses, even to an unlettered mind. It speaks for itself on all-important subjects, and commands the secret respect even of many who are professed unbelievers.

But to return to Paul's epistles.

The biography of this apostle will become more clear and interesting to us if we mark about twelve great periods in his life.

1. His appearance as a persecutor at Jerusalem.
2. His conversion on his way to Damascus.
3. His introduction to the apostles, and return to Tarsus.
4. His labours at Antioch.
5. His *first* missionary journey in Asia Minor.
6. His visit to Jerusalem about the Gentiles.
7. His *second* missionary journey, and introduction of the Gospel into Europe.
8. His *third* missionary journey, and stay of three years at Ephesus.
9. His seizure at Jerusalem, and imprisonment at Cæsarea.

10. His voyage to Rome, and stay there for two years in his own hired house, though in "bonds."

11. His release, and last missionary journey.

12. His third imprisonment and martyrdom.

A map of the missionary travels of Paul across and around the eastern side of the Mediterranean Sea, may be found in almost every Sunday-school library and manual. The Book of Acts, connected with his own letters, enables us to trace his journeys, to observe *where* he sojourned from time to time, and *whence* he wrote his Epistles.

We are now arrived at the ninth point of his history; he has wintered at Corinth, he is going for the fourth time up to Jerusalem, and this journey is related more minutely than the others: "We know all the places at which he stayed in sailing along those coasts among the famous Greek islands; the very time of the year is recorded; when the spring was clothing every low shore and every broken cliff with verdure; when the winter storms had ceased, and the small vessels could ply safely in shade and sunshine between neighbouring ports; we see where the vessel anchored for the night, and we can also perceive the state of the Apostle's mind: it was burdened even amid this bright scenery by forebodings of evil. When he came to Miletus, he said that already *in every city* the Spirit had admonished him that bonds and imprisonment were before him. At Tyre the first sounds he hears are the echoes of his own thoughts; at Cæsarea he has a last struggle with the remonstrances of those whom he loved. Yet he went on to Jerusalem, calmly and boldly, though doubtful of his reception even among Christian brethren, and not knowing what would happen on the morrow."

When he reached the city the multitude had

come up to the feast of Pentecost, and he must have remembered the deed of blood at which five-and-twenty years before he had himself assisted in the death of Stephen.

The brethren received him with joy—and to them "he declared particularly what things God had wrought among the Gentiles by his ministry." Also, he presented the temporal fruits of charity which he had gathered in return for his poor Jewish brethren at Jerusalem; and then follows the story of the tumult made by those who accused Paul of having "taught all the Jews among the Gentiles to forsake Moses—saying that they ought not to circumcise their children, neither to walk after the customs."

In fierce anger now they sought *his* blood, and would have had it, but that all Jerusalem being in an uproar, he was carried off by the Roman cohort stationed in the fort, whose captain being spoken to by Paul in Greek, permitted him, from a protected place upon the castle stairs, to speak unto the people. Alas! when he came to the declaration of God's free grace to the Gentiles, they were once more stung to fury, and said: "Away with such a fellow from the earth." Paul is henceforth in Roman custody, by which alone he escapes a cruel death at the hands of the Jews; but he has lost his freedom, and is sent a prisoner to Cæsarea, during which imprisonment it is conjectured that Luke wrote his Gospel under Paul's superintendence.

We do not know positively how Paul was employed at Cæsarea, but we do know that he was delivered to the custody of a centurion, and "bound," which means that the prisoner's right hand was chained to the soldier's left, but his friends were to be allowed to have free access to

him (see Acts xxiv.). Paul did not buy his liberty, though Felix hoped he would, and was left bound when Festus succeeded Felix, as governor, after the space of two years. The prisoner then appeals to Cæsar, and is sent to Rome. The date of this is known, A.D. 60.

On the voyage the weather was unfavourable, and they were exceedingly tossed with a tempest till even "all hope that they could be saved was taken away." While the heathen sailors were vainly struggling to save the ship, Paul was praying, and in the night there stood by him an angel of God, saying—

"Fear not, Paul; thou must stand before Cæsar: and, lo, God hath given thee all them that sail with thee."

Nevertheless, in storm and danger they drifted for fourteen days longer till wrecked upon the coast of Malta, though it came to pass as promised that "all escaped safe to land." At Malta, Paul wrought miracles, and won the hearts of the islanders, who gratefully set them forth again on their way towards Rome after a sojourn of three months on the island.

At last Paul is in Rome, welcomed by some of the disciples as he approached it by the Appian way. Two companies had gone out to meet them and to honour "the Ambassador in bonds," and for this he thanked God and took courage. He stood on the Alban mount overlooking a vast city, covering the plain of the Campagna, connected by its suburbs with the villas on the hills, and with bright towns on the opposite mountains. Aqueducts and roads all pointed into the centre of the city; but no elevated dome, or tower, or spires, marked it as a Christian city.

There were the crowded habitations of the poor, the dark haunts of filth and misery; and there

were theatres and colonnades and baths; temples and palaces with gilded roofs flashing back the sun; the vast ranges of the "house of Cæsar," covering the Capitoline hill; and here it is probable Paul was quartered, still bound by his chain to the centurion. The Coliseum was not then built, for it was before Nero's fire; but a mixed multitude were housed in piles of lodging-houses, perhaps best described by comparing them with those in the old town of Edinburgh. Two millions of inhabitants were crowded into a circuit of twelve miles. Another London—but with all its vices, miseries, and follies exaggerated, and without Christianity.

Beyond the Tiber was the quarter appointed to the Jewish community in Rome. In the early years of Nero they seemed to have enjoyed complete toleration, and to have been a numerous and wealthy body. There his brethren, according to the flesh, now expressed a wish to hear his doctrines from himself, and a day was fixed for a meeting at his own private lodging, to which they came in great numbers; and the Apostle endeavoured to persuade them by arguments drawn from their own Scriptures from morning till evening. But the result was only a further separation between the Apostle of the Gentiles, and the Jews at Rome.

We have not much space to consider his many writings during his continued imprisonment, still chained to the soldier; but he went on teaching will all confidence all who came to him, "no man forbidding him," and he had many spiritual children like Onesimus, begotten in his bonds; a crowd pressed on him daily, and he still felt he "had the care of all the Churches."

Though tied himself to a single spot, he still

kept up intercourse by his many converts throughout the empire. Luke remained with him, Timothy ministered to him, and Tychicus carried his letters. Mark, too, whom he had forgiven, was serviceable to him; and Demas, who at that time had not forsaken him, having loved this present world.

Philemon and Colossians.

His first letter from Rome is written to Philemon about Onesimus whom he sends back converted to his master under the care of Tychicus, who carried a letter to the Colossians, who, although much commended for their faith and love, were troubled and perverted by false teaching; about angel worship and the rudiments of monkery, "a show of humility and neglecting of the body;" by a philosophy which lowered Christ; and also, by an inculcation of a rigid observance of Jewish fasts and festivals. The Holy Spirit sends them, by Paul, a letter to counteract these growing evils.

Ephesians.

While Paul was sending this weighty letter to the Colossian Church, occasioned by growing errors in its faith and practice, he longed further to set forth the length, and breadth, and height of the Church of Christ, as risen with her Master into heavenly places, above the past lusts of the flesh, and created anew in Christ Jesus unto good works; and this glorious Epistle he addresses to the Ephesian Church as a type, a sample, of the Church Universal. In this letter he pours forth all the fulness of the Spirit's revelations on the great subject of the "Spouse" and "Body" of Christ. To the Christians at Ephesus dwelling under the

shadow of the great Temple of Diana, daily seeing its pomp and grandeur, and hearing of its rites and ceremonies, the allusions in the Epistle to that mysterious building of which Christ was the Corner Stone, and of which the Apostles had laid the foundation, must have been peculiarly forcible and appropriate.

Philippians.

The Epistle to the Philippians seems to have been written towards the end of Paul's imprisonment about A.D. 63. It contains less of censure and more of praise than Paul's other letters; it evidences also the gracious ripening of the writer's own spirit under his afflictions. The Philippians had lovingly helped to relieve his necessities, and he asks their prayers that Christ may be magnified in him, whether by life or by death. Lydia, whose "heart the Lord hath opened," dwelt in Philippi.

The "Pastoral Epistles" to Timothy and to Titus.

As the Book of Acts closes with the first residence of Paul at Rome, we must look for further information on the last years of the Apostle, to his own short "pastoral epistles" to Timothy and Titus written after this date; and to the records of early but uninspired Christian writers (Eusebius, Chrysostom, and Jerome are especially quoted); and we are, on the whole, led to believe that in A.D. 63, Paul was heard by Nero and set at liberty, that he then fulfilled the intent he had expressed to Philemon (verse 22 and Philippians ii. 24) of travelling east through Macedonia, and seeing once more the Churches of Asia Minor.

It further seems that he hastened on to Ephesus, possibly visited Colosse and Laodicea, where his

First Epistle to Timothy is said to have been written; and he may also have undertaken his long-wished-for journey to Spain, going by sea to Marseilles, and established the germs of Christian Churches in all the great cities along the Spanish coast. Jerome says, "Paul was dismissed by Nero, that he might preach the Gospel in the West."

The tares of error, however, were spreading; and the Apostle seems to have felt that while God had given him to *plant* the Gospel in the East and the West, some resident teachers of the truth must water the seed and watch over the vineyards. The outward forms of superstition were deluding the vulgar multitude; and those who fancied themselves wise were lost in the mazes of their own ideas.

The Spirit now guides Paul to the appointment of ruling elders or bishops, and prescribes their character and office. Alas! these did not prevent the heresies which convulsed the early Church in the next hundred years.

We may imagine the grief of Paul, who had called himself, even before this, in his letter to Philemon, "Paul the Aged," when he says to Timothy in his Second Epistle, i. 15, "Thou knowest that all they which are in Asia be turned away from me." He has, therefore, the more earnestly built up his true "sons in the faith," Timothy and Titus, in the form of sound words which they had heard of him, and directed them in dealing with the prevailing errors, and with the different classes of church members.

He left these younger men under the guidance of the Spirit, to do the work for which, perhaps, after thirty years of labour and suffering, his own physical energy failed. He was plainly hurried from one point to another, had again to visit

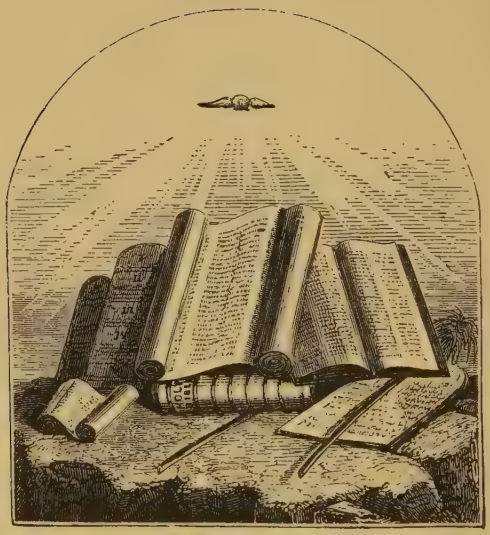
Macedonia, and then Crete; and when he leaves Titus in Crete he writes to him, as he had done to Timothy, what may serve as a document in token of the apostolic authority he gives them by the laying on of hands.

But his earthly pilgrimage is drawing to a close. It seems he had designed to winter at Nicopolis, and asked Titus to meet him there; but it seems most probable that as so eminent a leader was sure to find enemies everywhere, especially among his own nation, that he may have been arrested by the authorities at Nicopolis, and forwarded once more to Rome for trial.

In this last melancholy journey he seems to have had but few friends left to cheer him; perhaps they had been scattered at the terror of his fresh arrest. Luke at any rate remained faithful, accompanied his master once more over the wintry sea, and shared his second imprisonment at Rome: "Only Luke is with me" (2 Tim. iv. 11). The bonds were now much more severe than those of five years before.

The Second Epistle to Timothy is concluded to have been written from Rome after his return.

In 2 Tim. i. 16, Paul implies that it was dangerous and difficult to seek his prison, but that Onisephorus did it. No Christian ventured to stand by him in the court of judgment: (2 Tim. iv. 16), "All men forsook me. Notwithstanding the Lord stood with me and strengthened me," and he adds, "I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion." Nevertheless, as the final stage of his trial approaches he looks forward certainly to the sentence of death: (2 Tim. iv. 6), "I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand." We must resume the subject with the Epistle to the Hebrews in next month's tract.



THE WORD OF GOD,

THE TABLES, THE ROLLS, AND THE BOOK.

THE BOOK OF HEBREWS, and THE GENERAL EPISTLES.

No. V.

While Paul had been absent from Rome on his final missionary journey, there had taken place the first public persecution of the Christians by Nero. Let those who visit the British Museum, gaze upon the awful and sensual face of that Roman emperor, in the gallery that leads to the Halls of Nineveh and of Egypt. The face of a wild beast is noble in comparison with it; and how he must have glared at the Apostle Paul from his ivory chair of heathen judgment.

The doom is spoken: the monster is not sated yet with crucifying and hunting to death the followers of Jesus—with illuminating Rome by night with the burning bodies of Christians wrapt in robes of pitch, with their bleeding chins impaled on sharp stakes; he has gloated over those human "torches" in his own gardens; but now the chief must close the train. He is a Roman citizen, therefore he must not be tortured, but the aged saint must be cruelly flogged with the lictors' rods and then beheaded.

There is the sepulchral pyramid of Caius Cestius still standing which must have caught the eye of the martyr going forth to win his apostolic crown. Around it now Papal Rome suffers Protestant strangers to bury their dead; the disciples of Paul sleep in Christ near the spot which his blood once watered.

So the executioners marched forth in a procession more triumphal than had ever followed emperor,

to set the prisoner free from his long course of sufferings. The sword of the headsman fell. Then weeping friends (perhaps Luke and Timothy) carried the corpse to the catacombs, in whose underground windings the persecuted Church found a place of worship for her living members, and graves for her dead.

So passed from earth the Apostle of the Gentiles, the herald of "glad tidings," into the bosom of the Lord who had called him and changed him from the persecuting Saul into the missionary Paul.

There is no *scriptural* record of the martyrdom of Paul or Peter; but the Emperor Nero's death occurred A.D. (or in the year of our Lord) 68; and it is a universally received tradition that Paul was executed at Rome in the reign of Nero. Clement, who lived there at the same time, and many other of the early fathers, witness both to that and to the martyrdom of PETER as also occurring in Rome, and under Nero.

Peter's name as founder is not associated with any local Church. He testified of Christ at Corinth and at Antioch; but the early Churches are instructed *not* to say "I am of Paul, and I am of Cephas (or Peter), and I of Apollos,"—and there is no notice of Peter's labours or even presence in Rome at the time that Paul wrote his Epistle to the Romans; and there are no traces of his being in Rome until the last year or two of his life. It may be inferred from his First Epistle that he had visited Babylon and thence wrote to the strangers of his people scattered abroad in Asia Minor.

Babylon was at that time a chief seat of Jewish culture. The Jewish families formed a separate and wealthy community, and they kept up a constant intercourse with Judea.

The work of preaching the Gospel to the Gentiles

had been specially given of God to Paul and Barnabas; and that of preaching to the people of the Circumcision was assigned more particularly to the elder apostles, and to Peter. Yet this arrangement was not exclusive; for Paul always addressed himself first to the Jews in every city; and Peter with the rest of the apostles also sought converts among the Gentiles.

He must have been employed in building up Christian communities in Palestine and elsewhere. The evidence of his martyrdom in Rome appears to be complete. John, in his Gospel, tells us that our Lord had predicted for him such an end—(John xxi. 18, 19)—and one of the early fathers (Ambrose) relates that when Nero's persecution began, the Christians at Rome, anxious to preserve their great teacher, persuaded him to flee, a course which Scripture had enjoined.

"When they persecute you in one city flee into another."

Tradition adds that Peter consented and fled; but at the gate he met our Lord. "Lord, whither goest thou?" asked the Apostle. "I go to Rome," was the answer; "there once more to be crucified." Peter well understood the meaning of those words—went back, and was crucified: some add, with his head downwards. Origen ascribes this to the choice of Peter, who deemed himself unworthy to suffer in the same position as his Lord.

There are many examples during the siege of Jerusalem, of the spirit of cruel mockery with which the Roman soldiers fastened their victims to the cross in all manner of strange attitudes. We know not certainly whether Peter thus departed first, or followed to heaven "his beloved brother, Paul."

And what of Luke, Paul's faithful companion to the end? After the death of the Apostle we hear

of *his* acts no more—we only know him as he stands by the side of his dear friend and teacher.

His age, at the time of his death, is uncertain. That he died a martyr after the destruction of Jerusalem, has been asserted by many. We know that he was honoured and inspired to be the writer of two most valuable portions of the New Testament, the Gospel called by his name, and the delightful book of the Acts. It has often been conjectured that the last epistle so-called, in our Bibles, as Paul's,

THE EPISTLE OF PAUL, THE APOSTLE TO THE HEBREWS,

but which has no name of Paul at its beginning like the other epistles, may probably have been transcribed by Luke from the last inspirations of Paul. It is addressed in the 3rd chapter to "Holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling"—the followers of the "great High Priest," Christ Jesus, whom He was not ashamed to call brethren, even though He was God.

The Epistle begins with a verse that shews its whole intent. God, who had spoken to the fathers of the Hebrew nation in times past, in very various manners, now speaks by His beloved Son; and this Epistle is the unravelling of the message spoken to former generations (who had been taught only by sign and symbol) to the men of the circumcision.

The old Established Church of Palestine of that day had refused to hear Paul, in city after city—year after year—so now the Spirit delivers by him a last message—and it is to come announced in the name of God Himself. Paul is neither to be seen nor heard; and though it passes through his mind and soul, and receives the stamp of his ripened and powerful intellect, his chained hands, and his weak

sight, prevent his writing it—and "Luke only is with him."

It *may* be Luke, who says at the end, (after Paul's "Amen," in the 21st verse of the 13th chapter of Hebrews) that *he* writes a few words to them to say that his beloved brother Timothy is set at liberty—(Paul would have called him his dear son)—and that he, Luke, hopes to see the brethren (in Judea) with him; for the execution of Paul was yet future, and not yet utterly realized even by himself, though in the same last chapter, (ver. 13, 14,) he has just said he was *ready* to follow Jesus "without the gate," "without the camp," bearing His reproach, and to suffer with Him; and exhorts those to whom he writes to be also ready. Still a last faint hope lingers with *him* of being once more restored to those holy brethren, his fellow-believers; but in any event he pronounces upon them the divine blessing of the departing Apostle; and closes his letter, his wonderful letter; for an intimate study of *all* his letters makes it, as we think, impossible to ascribe it to any other apostle than Paul —to Peter or to Barnabas, or to Silas, or to Apollos —for it is the winding up of all Paul's other letters —and it is the most important and useful of them all.

And why should this be said?

Because all the doctrines of the Gospel are found in the Book of Hebrews, enforced and illustrated by the most striking examples pointed unto, as if they were torches at fixed distances, lighting up the vast dark plain of the past, the gradual revelations of God to man *from* the first day of his creation on the earth *unto* the advent of Christ, who takes upon HIM man's nature.

"God hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son."

There are many things in this letter to the Hebrews that show it to be the very voice of God from heaven, to the chosen people of the Old Covenant; and also to *all* God's chosen people, His spiritual Israel of the New Covenant, to the end of time: and it should be especially precious to them, *if* at any season the things that they have deemed sacred and meet to last for ever—are abolished—changed and folded up as a vesture by the finger of the eternal God, who lives and reigns beyond all change. "Here we have no continuing city," says the Epistle; "but we seek one to come."

The shadows of heavenly things, at that era, even *though they had been* in every jot and tittle ordained of God, were about to pass away. The first covenant was "not faultless"; and a place must be made for the second. The worldly sanctuary, the snowy marble temple, with all its priceless relics, was about to vanish, and not one stone to be left upon another.

All the glory of the Jewish priesthood was shown to have been *but a figure.* The meats and the drinks, and the washings were declared all to have been carnal ordinances which a time of reformation would destroy; and all visible sacrifices for sin were likewise useless. They had been but the figures of *the true One Sacrifice;* the sacrifice by Christ *of Himself.* So fell, by God's own fiat, all the magnificent ritual which had been shrined like a gem in the heart of every believing Jew; and to comfort him under his mighty loss, there arose in the darkness for him this book of the Hebrews, this wondrous pillar of the truth of God, that was to stand when Herod's temple fell by fire and sword, and fix the sorrowing souls of the rejected people on a kingdom that could never be taken from them. They were despoiled of their temporal hopes, and

they had to bear the disappointment of a selfish and exclusive desire to be the first among the nations.

Now it is in the Book of Hebrews that they are lifted up from that exclusive selfishness and shown that their story is but a chapter in the vast decrees of God—a chapter that belonged to a previous history—that Christ had not taken, and would not take upon Him, a priesthood like that of Moses; but like a previous patriarchal priesthood which that of the mysterious Melchisedec had foreshadowed—the high priesthood of the Son of God.

Oh, "saying hard to be uttered," seeing they were dull of hearing. (Chap. v. 11.) But hear it they must, and cling to the *reality left* amid the ruins of all they held sacred—the Christ Jesus come to bring His kingdom by gradual revelation of Himself, to humble souls: "a hope set before them," which should never be taken away. And so the Epistle leads them from Mount Sinai to Mount Zion; from the Law to the Gospel—to the heavenly city, and the countless angels—to the Church of the first-born, freed from its mistakes in the flesh, and to Jesus the Mediator of the New Covenant, of whom the writer says: "See that ye refuse not Him that speaketh"; for if they escaped not who refused him who spake on earth, much more shall not we escape if we turn away from Him that speaketh from heaven.

There are no very trustworthy sources of information as to the personal appearance of Paul the Apostle. The pictures of him by early artists describe a short stature, a long face with high and bald forehead, an aquiline nose, close and prominent eyebrows, and sparkling grey eyes; the hair brown, the beard long, flowing, and pointed—an elegant and thoughtful head which looks like that of a Greek philosopher.

Peter is painted as a bald old man, with a broad forehead and rather strong features, an open undaunted countenance, short grey hair and short thick beard, curled and of a silvery white. These pictures have probably some foundation in truth, though from Paul's continual journeys and manual labour it would be natural to suppose that *he* was gifted with great strength of body; but men of feeble health have occasionally gone through the greatest exertions, and Paul's own words on more than one occasion show that he suffered much from bodily infirmity; "the Lord often makes use of the weak things of the earth to confound the things that are mighty.

The General Epistles.

We must now pass on to what are called the short General Epistles. They are seven in number; two from Peter, one from James, and one from Jude; with three from John, which we reserve for consideration with that Apostle's other writings.

The books of the New Testament would be in number twenty-eight, (or four sevens,) if the Epistle of Paul to Laodicea, which he speaks of in the Epistle to the Colossians had been added to the canon of the inspired books, which it is not; why, we cannot say.

"And when this epistle is read among you, cause that it be read also in the Church of the Laodiceans; and that ye likewise read the epistle from Laodicea." (Col. iv. 10.)

Without it Paul's autograph Epistles are but thirteen, and the four Gospels, the book of Acts, the book of Hebrews, and the book of Revelation, compose the fourth seven, and make the present number of books in the New Testament *twenty-seven*,

which with *thirty-nine* in the Old Testament, compose the number *sixty-six*.

PETER.

The actual Scripture history of PETER'S part in the foundation of Christianity, ceases with his miraculous deliverance from the prison, where he lay condemned to death by Herod Agrippa. Almost direct from his prison door he left Jerusalem, but we are not told whither he went, certainly not to Rome. He makes one more appearance at the council at Jerusalem, over which James presided; and there urged the great principle that the Gentiles had received the Holy Ghost and should be saved by Jesus Christ, as well as the Jews, with which James agrees; and then the council send forth Barnabas and Paul, "who even at that time are commended as men that have hazarded their lives for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

It has been remarked that as each step in the spread of the Gospel is completed, the immediate human agent passes out of view, while the results of his work continue and extend; Peter and James, Paul and John in turn depart.

Peter had used "his keys." He had opened the gates of the Church of Christ to Jews and Gentiles, on the day of Pentecost. To the men of the Old Empires, to Chaldeans, Medes and Persians, and to the men of Israel exiled into Chaldea and Persia; (now called Nestorians)—to Egyptians, and Romans, and Arabians, and to Jews scattered everywhere among them, the tongues of fire that day proclaimed, far and wide, in their own languages, the wonderful works of God, and "that GOD had made that same JESUS who had been crucified, both Lord and Christ;" while amid wonders and signs on that supernatural day there

were added unto the Church by Peter's preaching *three thousand souls.*

Peter writes his First Epistle from Babylon; he goes himself into Chaldea, and in his Second he alludes to the writings of Paul, and witnesses unto their truth. The Pauline Epistles must therefore have been in circulation. The tone of Peter's own letters is that of a man advanced in life and approaching the end of his career.

To him and to Jude are given in their measure some of the same wonderful revelations of the *future*, as under the teaching of God's Spirit they meditate upon the *past.* They both look around on their *present*, and see "ungodly men crept in unawares among the Christians," turning the grace of God into lasciviousness." (Jude 4.) "Speaking great swelling words of vanity," and "alluring through the lusts of the flesh." (2 Peter ii. 18.) "Scoffers, saying, Where is the promise of his coming?" and the Apostles *both* look back to the days of Balaam and to the days of Sodom, and to the fall of the angels, and reading the book of God's *past* judgments, by the spirit of prophecy foretell the *future*, the day of fiery judgment that shall eclipse the perishing of the earth by water, the "coming with ten thousand saints to convince the ungodly of their deeds and their hard speeches" —and then each aged saint looks *onward* like John in the Revelation to the "presence of the glory," to the "new heavens and new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness."

James.

The very practical Epistle of James must either have been written by James the son of Zebedee, as the Syriac version says, or by James the brother of the Lord, which is the general opinion; or by James the son of Alpheus, surnamed James the Just. It

was written from Jerusalem, and to the *twelve tribes* scattered abroad, showing that Christ's Gospel would bring Ephraim and Judah together once more. It is a synopsis of the moral teaching of the New Testament, and is a code for the Gentiles, though written for the Jews. Purity and patience are its grand texts, and it therefore describes the perfection of the Christian life. It is the *Christian Law*, the law of the new kingdom, the same as that given in the Sermon on the Mount, and is supposed to have been written about fifteen years after the Pentecost. James seems to have been himself a high example of Old Testament and Christian piety in its purest form. He still insisted on minor Jewish matters, on not eating of meats that had been offered to idols, or blood, or things strangled. It has been said that "had not Peter and, above all, had not Paul arisen and written *after James*, perhaps Christianity would never have been freed entirely from the thrall of Judaism." But such was not the mind of the Spirit, and meanwhile that wondrous sermon on the sins of the tongue which we find in the Epistle of James, true to the letter to this day, is shrined in every Christian memory as deeply as Paul's grand psalm of charity in 1 Cor. xiii.

And now ere the Apostle John shall lead us back to look afresh upon the Son of God on earth, and forward to the New Jerusalem, let us glance back for ourselves on the *sixty-six* books that have told us their own story, gathered into one volume called The Bible. It must have been the mind of God that ordered the links of their connection, for no one mind of man endured for 1,500 years ;—the space they took in writing. A design runs through them all. They are *all* links in a chain, and not one can drop out or be misplaced without great injury to the whole. Those who *study* Scripture *as a*

whole cannot help finding the plan on which it is constructed, and it is not *they* who will dare to set aside *this* portion as a fable, and *that* as unlikely. They can do no other than take it as God has given it, and preserved it, and miraculously brought it down to us in all its main purity and simplicity for 1,800 years more.

It has been truly said that "there is a Christian instinct that can perceive the *oneness* of the Bible and the story it has to tell." God would teach the world by the history of *one* people, whose ancestors are marked out from the time of the flood, and who have existed from *then* until *now*. To them He gave an historian and a book of His laws, a moral discipline to educate them for Himself. At His own appointed time He brought into the world His own Son as their Redeemer. He was born of a virgin mother of that chosen nation according to the prophecies; but though they reverenced the prophecies, yet they would not have this heavenly King to reign over them: therefore God rejected THEM, and yet left them *as a witness to Himself in their continued unbelief to all the earth* down to this day before our eyes, a people whose ancient history is all miracle, and the *very sight of whom* chains one age to another according to the testimony of their holy books.

In these holy books God has revealed His divine will to all the world. He has employed human languages—necessarily imperfect even in God's perfect use of them, for all human instruments are imperfect—yet He did not choose supernatural ones to convey His message of salvation. The human messengers are not constantly asserting their own authority, but God gives the books His authority. As each of their portions was uttered or recorded, its facts were known and believed by its own generation, or alse a full denial would have

come down with them, but they have been handed on age after age. Men have never been *forcibly compelled* to believe them, but the guilt and punishment of unbelief are shown in the records themselves. God's proofs of His truth are mighty and have been progressive, but men have been "slow of heart to believe;" the chosen nation were, and so is man's whole race. See how God marks the bright exceptions in Hebrews xi.

"Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him for righteousness."

We have reviewed

THE PRE-MOSAIC PERIOD

as contained in the *first seven chapters* of the book of Genesis, and in the 777 years after the flood to the birth of Moses, who was born 1571 years B.C. To that Pre-Mosaic history we have *not* the testimony of his eye-witness, therefore let us content ourselves with the witness of God, who however has suffered it to appear in the narrative that seven long-lived and holy persons could have handed it down across the flood through Noah's family. The lives of ADAM and METHUSELAH stretched across the 1,656 years before the flood; and SHEM, who survived it 500 years, and had lived a hundred years with Methuselah, may have seen and talked with not only Abraham, but ISAAC, who stood twenty-first from ADAM, and was the great grandfather of Jochebed, daughter of Levi, and mother of MOSES.

Let us place ourselves at the date of Moses, and count once more—as the links in a chain—the *few* persons, about *thirty-three* in number, who were inspired of God as the writers of the different books of our Bible. The writers being *thirty-three*, the books are easily remembered, as *twice that number* or *sixty-six*. The names of the books themselves often recal those of the writers.

The writing of the Books of the Old Testament was spread over a thousand years.

The Writers.	*The Names of the Books.*
Moses, six books.	The Pentateuch and Job, 1400 B.C.
Joshua, "Moses'" Minister.	Joshua.
Samuel the prophet, with aid of Gad and Nathan, the seers; and of—	Judges; I and II Samuel. Two books of Kings and two of Chronicles.
Ezra and Nehemiah, the historians.	Their own books, Ezra and Nehemiah, and Esther.
David and other poets.	The Psalms.
Solomon.	Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and the Song.
Isaiah. Jeremiah. Ezekiel. Daniel. — The 4 greater prophets.	The prophecy of Isaiah. Jeremiah, and the Lamentations. Ezekiel. Daniel.
Hosea, Joel. Amos, Obadiah. Jonah, Micah. Nahum, Habakkuk. Zephaniah, Haggai. Zechariah, Malachi. — The 12 minor prophets.	Hosea, Joel. Amos, Obadiah. Jonah, Micah. Nahum, Habakkuk. Zephaniah, Haggai. Zechariah, Malachi, 400 B.C.

About four hundred and fifty years' interval.

The New Testament was written within the space of about fifty years.

Matthew the Evangelist.	Gospel of Matthew.
Mark.	,, ,, Mark.
Luke.	,, ,, Luke and Acts.
Paul the Apostle.	Fourteen Epistles.
Peter.	1 and 2 Peter.
James.	James.
Jude.	Jude.
John the Evangelist.	The Gospel of John, three Letters, and the Book of Revelation.

The first book of Moses, and the first in our Bible—the book of GENESIS, comprises the story of 2,369 years from the birth of Adam to the death of Joseph. There is no other inspired book which represents such a period of time. It is twenty-one years longer than the whole space of 2,348 years between the Flood and the birth of Christ at Bethlehem.

Now it is said that the *first* class of historical books are written by *eye-witnesses* of the events recorded, but Genesis is an exception to this rule. For Moses only begins to be an eye-witness when he writes the book of EXODUS, or the going up out of Egypt; but he writes his *other* four books as an eye-witness, and he may probably have had a personal intimacy with the grand old patriarch Job, who being mentioned in holy writ with Noah and Daniel by the prophet Ezekiel, (chap. xiv. 14), and also in the New Testament in the Epistle of James as an example of patience (chap. v. 11), cannot possibly be other than a real person.

In Job's discourses with his friends, as we know, is represented the belief of the patriarchal days, the days in which there was no *written word* of God as we have it, but in which holy men were taught the Divine will by the law of God written in their hearts.

But that era passed away; and for whom was the book of Genesis written? for the people of the Exodus. The God of their fathers left not their education to oral tradition, He reveals to them afresh by Moses who God was, and who they were themselves, and what was their duty to HIM, also how the earth had been created. No scientific history is given to them, for they would not have understood it; but they are taught the spiritual truth which is above all other truth; and, meanwhile, all at which the

highest science of man has yet arrived, cannot contradict the statements of the Book of Genesis as to the time of Man's creation upon the globe, the Descent of the human race from a single pair, and the Deluge.

The religious teaching to the chosen people was contained in the story of the Fall, the Deluge, and the Dispersion. Through all these it is clearly seen that man having sinned, cannot save *himself*. Then one race of man came out into the foreground. God chooses ONE family and their descendants to whom to reveal HIS LAW, and THE PERIOD OF THE LAW *follows* what had been the first three stages of their history, viz. their settlement in Egypt; their sojourn there; and their exodus.

They were not a pure-blooded race. Many a heathen and foreign element had clustered round a few families of Abrahamic descent on the male side. They had a natural aristocracy in the heads of their tribes, to whom belonged the government; and there was among them a spiritual aristocracy, some "called to be saints," an early type of the true Church of Christ. Most of the people, however, were at the time of the Exodus in a state of religious unbelief and indifference, the lower part of their nature had been nurtured by Egyptian idolatry and superstition; and while some sighed for the God of their fathers, others cared more for the flesh-pots of Egypt; but the two classes were fused together in the iron furnace of bondage in the land of Goshen, and then under Moses in the desert, and there God introduced them to a LAW, to a miraculous history, and to a visible symbol of His Presence, revealing Himself as an ever-present and awful God, who must be served obediently by sacrifice.

The Period of the Kingdom.

After the training of the desert there followed the period of the kingdom,—all moral influences over nations take periods of time to develop; and in the desert this people had been prepared of God for a golden age of conquest, under Joshua, "Moses' minister." Would they now destroy the heathen Canaanites or not? They began to do so under the Lord's captain, but ere long they adopted their sensual idolatry, and became again "like unto the heathen."

Then followed the tyrannies of heathen masters to purify this chosen race, and we get this part of the story in the books of Judges and of Ruth.

In Kings and Chronicles the design of God becomes further shown forth; and now the nation is become prosperous and visible to the world's eye in the imperial glories of David and Solomon, but alas! decline, division, and fall, follow that glory, "There is no true king for *them* but the coming Christ, to whom their hopes are being thrown forward by a long line of prophets, during all the reigns of the now divided kings of Judah and of Israel.

It can only be known by an industrious consultation of the references which are made by the writer of the Hebrews to the whole range of the Old Testament books; how, by quotation or allusion, he indicates his intimate knowledge of them all. There are whole chapters on the meaning of the ordinances in Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy, the history in Judges, Kings, and Chronicles, and the Psalms of David are largely quoted; also Isaiah, Jeremiah, and several of the minor prophets also. He touches each link of the chain, and rivets the whole to the times of the Gospel.

It was Jesus Christ, "that Great Shepherd of the Sheep," who was foreshadowed by all gone before. After the Babylonish captivity the Jews came out confident in their national election and hating idols, for they knew that it was by their idolatry that they lost their land. They now desired to maintain their lonely supremacy among the nations, supreme they thought, because they alone had received from heaven the law of God. Alas! in their exclusive pride they adhered to its letter instead of its spirit; and so far from looking for a *spiritual* kingdom for their Messiah when He came, they hoped most and first in all their temporal promises.

Such was human perversion of God's design; but God has held that wonderful people to His purpose in spite of themselves. They have still the great mission of a chosen nation. They have a place in the story of every nation that has ruled the world, and have left the trace of their religion, literature, and laws, on each in turn.

Then came a period of about 400 years when their inspired history ceases, and when miracles concerning them ceased. They, with all the earth, had to wait for the Saviour of mankind to learn that "the world by wisdom knew not God;" —proved by the vain shortcomings of every heathen nation. In the meantime the ancient Nineveh and Babylon sank into their graves, for they were vile; and their language with its arrow-headed signs was buried, and a far more universal tongue—the Greek—was provided to diffuse the Gospel of Christ.

With the advent of the Saviour miracles began again, and He and His Apostles adopt by full allusion the whole Old Testament Story from Adam

downwards. The books of the New Testament all fit into those of the Old. The personal work and ministry of Christ Himself begin a course of Missionary enterprise from Jerusalem to all the world, by human instruments endued with Divine power.

"*Lo, I am with you* always, to the end of the world."

The soldiers of Christ go forth to conquer *in His Name*, they have in hand "*the sword of the Spirit*," His written word. To this day it has gone on conquering and to conquer, and the edge of its blade is unturned. When the enemy of souls would disarm Christ's soldiers, he tries to find fault with their sword, and in one way or other to unsettle their faith in their heavenly weapon. Let them hold it fast, and their faith in it.

"Contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints."

"Delivered" in the *chain* of the books, in which not a link is faulty, and none are missing, that the Spirit of God would have had preserved; vain men may puzzle themselves by trying to break the chronological or historical *chain* in which the books of our Bible follow one another, but an intelligent plan pervades the whole, and the whole are supernatural, and a revelation from God.

The soldiers of Rome went forth to conquer in the first century of the New Dispensation, and under the Emperor Claudius, who reigned from eight to fifteen years after the ascension of our Lord. They re-conquered Britain, which Julius Cæsar had invaded 100 years before.

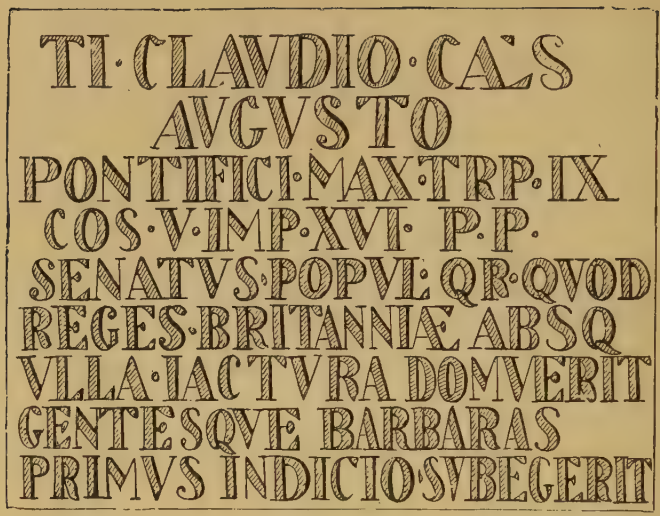
We have spoken of the Roman Emperor Nero. He and the three emperors who reigned before him are mentioned in the New Testament. Augustus, Luke ii. 1; Tiberius, Luke iii. 1; and Claudius, Acts xi. 28; xviii. 2. The latter, we see, "had com-

manded all Jews to depart from Rome." The date of his reign given in our Bibles is 54 A.D. In the court of the Barberini Palace at Rome there is seen imbedded a stone with an old Latin inscription which we give you in the frontispiece to this tract, signifying that this same Claudius had conquered Britain and its kings, with perhaps other "barbarous nations." This inscription is part of a triumphal arch erected to the Emperor Claudius by the Senate and Roman people, and the letters were once of bronze sunk in the marble.

"The only accession to the Roman Empire," says Gibbon, "during the first century of the Christian era, was the province of Britain. After a war of about forty years, under Claudius, Nero, and Domitian, the greater part of the island submitted to the Roman yoke. Neither the fortitude of Caractacus nor the despair of Boadicea, nor the fanaticism of the Druids could resist the steady progress of the Imperial generals."

We shall see in chapters yet to come, how our country also very early received the tidings of salvation by Christ, and probably from those who had heard of Him while prisoners in Rome.

Perhaps we have very little idea how far and wide the heavenly seed of the New Testament message from God was carried, by means of "living epistles"—by the lives of those who had heard it in the first century of the Christian era. It was spoken largely to the Greek as well as to the Syriac world—all round the shores of the Mediterranean Sea. That seed bore wondrous fruit, for the living voices of those who had *seen* that of which they bore witness, *while all the world might have disputed it if it had not been true*, had wondrous weight and power.



INSCRIPTION IN THE COURT OF THE BARBERINI PALACE, ROME.

TRANSLATION.

TO CLAUDIUS CÆSAR
AUGUSTUS,
PONTIFEX MAXIMUS (CHIEF PRIEST) WITH TRIBUNITIAL POWER
FOR THE NINTH TIME, CONSUL FOR THE FIFTH TIME,
(SALUTED) EMPEROR (AFTER A VICTORY) FOR THE SIXTEENTH
TIME.
FATHER OF HIS COUNTRY.
THE SENATE AND PEOPLE OF ROME
(ERECTED THIS STONE)
BECAUSE HE HAD SUBDUED WITHOUT ANY LOSS
THE KINGS OF BRITAIN, AND SUBJUGATED BARBAROUS NATIONS
BY DISCOVERY.

THE GOSPEL OF JOHN, HIS LETTERS AND HIS PROPHECY.

No. VI.

John xx. 30, 31.

"And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book:

"But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through His Name."

In these two verses we have the whole scope of the *last* of the four Gospels—written after the others, and telling very many things that they do not tell. John was the youngest of the inspired Apostles, and had been the most intimate companion and personal friend of his Divine Master. At the Crucifixion he received the tender charge to take his Lord's place *as a son* to His own dear mother; and "that disciple," as he often calls himself, "from that hour took her unto his own home."

John never names himself—*i.e.*, by name—in his own Gospel: he is "that disciple," or "that other disciple," or "*the disciple whom Jesus loved.*" By the last sweet title he calls himself five times (xiii. 23; xix. 26; xx. 2; xxi. 7, 20), and "that disciple" or "that other disciple" seven times.

It is delightful to turn back from the Epistle to the Hebrews (which we last considered), with all its mighty comments on the whole CHAIN of the books of the Old Testament, direct to the first chapter of the Gospel of John. The key-note is the same; and

John actually repeats the very first words of Genesis —"in the beginning;" and he even goes back beyond *that* beginning, to the existence of God's own Son *before* all created things. "In every verse of his first chapter," it has been said, "we learn something about Christ that we did not know before." Nowhere else is the doctrine of the Divine and human nature as combined in the Redeemer, set forth so simply yet so deeply.

From this Apostle we learn that, coming forth from the source of life and light, Christ is the Jehovah manifest, or shown forth, to men. Yet He came into the world, and the world knew Him not. There had been all the preparation for Him recorded in the Old Testament; but men's hearts were not ready for Him, save those of a few; not even when this Divine Word took a tabernacle of flesh and dwelt amongst us. The glory of the Lord had shone in it; and this glory JOHN *himself had beheld*, and was now called forth by the Holy Ghost to record.

The beloved John, the son of Zebedee, comes into view but seldom in the Book of Acts. He is thrown into the background by his friend Peter; yet he is one of the favoured four who had been the earliest followers of the Lord—John, Peter, Andrew, and Philip. The age of John must have been between 20 and 25 when he followed John the Baptist, preaching in the desert, and heard him tell of "One mightier than he" upon whom, while He knelt at His baptism in Jordan, the heavens had been opened; and "I saw," said John the Baptist,

> "I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it abode upon Him, and I knew Him not; but He that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me: Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending and remaining on Him, the same is He which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost."

Again, the next day, John the Baptist stood, and two of his disciples—Andrew, and John, the son of Zebedee, who tells the event. The Baptist, looking upon Jesus, says: "Behold the Lamb of God." And he says it of one known to himself, and known to those around, hitherto only as Jesus of Nazareth, the son of the Carpenter, a kinsman both of the Baptist and of Zebedee's son, whom *they* had never thought of looking on as the "Deliverer" of Israel; but John's two disciples followed Jesus—and He invited them to the place where He dwelt; and they believed on Him, saying, "We have found the Christ." Henceforth they become the Lord's disciples, and soon afterwards accompany Him to the wedding feast at Cana of Galilee—behold the miracle there wrought—and again, John the Apostle records, "and His disciples believed on Him."

But it was now the season of the Passover; and Jesus and His disciples, probably, joined the pilgrims who were going on foot to Jerusalem, and saw their new Master drive the money-changers from the temple courts. On their return, they seem to have betaken themselves to their usual work, and nightly swept the lake for fish, as men do still from their very birth-place of Bethsaida, (the house of fish,) on that very lake of Galilee.

One morning, after having toiled all night and taken nothing, they were washing their nets, and saw their Master approaching, with a dense crowd around Him, listening to His words; and He entered Simon's boat and bade him push out a little on the lake, even while he continued His discourse.

"When He had left speaking He bade them launch into deep water and let down the net, which they were not accustomed to do by day-light, and

an enormous number of fish come unexpectedly to the haul, and the net brake, while the Lord makes this the occasion of calling them away finally from their fishery, saying to Peter, 'Fear not: from henceforth thou shalt catch *men*.'"

The accounts of this event will be found in Luke v., Matt. iv., and Mark i. Meanwhile James and John, the sons of Zebedee, returned to the shore, and were busy with their father, Zebedee, mending their nets, when Jesus called *them* in similar words to those he had used to Peter and Andrew: "Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men." And they straightway left all, and followed Him—Zebedee and his hired servants remaining with the glistening heaps of fish—while they, from that moment, attend their Master from city to city, according to His word.

Other disciples, too, were chosen; but these four always followed the most closely. Peter was the eldest, John and his brother James, the younger men; and John at that time by no means ripened in his gentleness. They were called Boanerges, "the sons of thunder;" they asked the Lord to consume their opposers; they constantly looked for Him to reveal Himself in heavenly splendour, though their task at that time was only to wander from place to place, and watch their master heal the sick, hear Him discourse on hillsides, or plains, or in the streets at festivals—as one among the common people.

All His discourses were explained to His little inner circle, who could hearken as well as listen. They were to minister of the same truths to the gathering crowds; and were gifted to work miracles, as it seems, in proportion to their own faith.

They saw the loaves and fishes multiplied—they

saw the storm stilled—they saw Jesus walk upon the water—the saw Him raise the daughter of Jairus from the dead—and they supposed this was all the preparation for Him to take to Him His glorious power, rise to the throne of David at once, and reign over all His enemies.

But how different a path lay first before them!

For they who hoped to *reign* with Him must first learn to *suffer* with Him. After all the grand career of teaching and healing comes the shadow of deep sorrow upon Christ and His disciples. He had often forewarned them of it, but they were "slow to believe" His words.

The brighter shone the light from heaven, the more did His enemies seek to quench it. And the Lord draws His disciples nearer and nearer into the shadow of His cross—the deepest shadow that ever shamed humanity, when HE was "despised and rejected of men whom He came to save."

During that last week of conflict with sin and death how bewildered must His followers have been, even "sleeping for sorrow" in their strain of feeling.

"Could ye not watch with me one hour?"

said their Master in His agony. "No!" Worn out with hope deferred—mistrust creeping in besides fear and cowardice, at the last—"they all forsook Him and fled"—all resolve was gone—all constancy—all repose in Him. The Shepherd was smitten, and the sheep were scattered. Their very hopes had died within them—are spoken of in the walk to Emmaus as belonging to the past: "We trusted that it had been He which should have redeemed Israel."

Could there have been a gap in the belief even of those who had seen the Transfiguration? It was given first to Mary's tenderness and patience to see the Lord again. She had called Peter and John to the sepulchre; and though they saw that He was risen, and believed; yet "they went back to their own home." But Mary lingered, and *her* sight was not holden, for she saw the angels—and the Lord called her by her name, and so rekindled all her faith. John tells us this. She had confided it to His beloved disciple, and the Spirit shut it safe in his heart, and long years afterwards he wrote it at Ephesus.

This brings us to the

Gospel of John.

This Gospel is certainly later in its date than the other three, yet makes no mention more than they do of the destruction of Jerusalem. It even contains this expression, (chap. v. 2), "There *is* at Jerusalem, by the sheep market, a pool," implying that Jerusalem still existed; and again, (see chap. xxi. 22), "If I will that he tarry till I come," which *phase* of the Lord's coming as alluded to by Himself when on earth, *must have been* the destruction of Jerusalem. If *that* had already happened before the writing of his Gospel, John would surely have commented upon it here, as he does in the same chapter on the meaning of Christ's prediction concerning Peter's death.

The precise date of John's Gospel cannot be ascertained. There is the ancient testimony of Irenæus that it was written at Ephesus, and if just before Jerusalem was destroyed, it would yet have been more than thirty-five years after the Crucifixion and Ascension.

It is evidently written with a plan, and as assuming that the facts of the previous gospels are already known. It gives no details of the Birth or the Temptation of our Lord; of the Transfiguration, the calling of the Apostles, or the institution of the Lord's Supper. In this and other ways it is shewn to be a supplement to the other gospels.

But the personal love which his Lord had shewn to John, had doubtless admitted him to deeper and greater manifestations of His divinity, than the rest of the disciples, and we judge by his narrations of his Lord's words, that he heard some things the others did not hear.

He does not seem to have argued and questioned like the rest, but rather to have pondered his Lord's sayings in his heart, like the Virgin mother, who was perhaps committed to his charge from some personal community of disposition. Though at first a Boanerges, "a son of thunder," gentleness appears to have become the chief feature of his ripened character. He may possibly have been by this last charge of his Master, set aside from the more active labours of his brethren in the first missions of the Christian Church. "That disciple took her to his own home." Some early fathers say that she survived for fifteen years. They also relate that the Apostle John had subsequently settled in Parthia among the Kurds, and that to that people his first epistle is written.

We may conclude, probably, that when Paul's last imprisonment left the Churches of Asia without their guide, and when Timothy had reached his rest in heaven, John fixed himself at Ephesus, for he alone remained of all the apostolic band; and the Church sighed for an utterance from him, that should tell them more about his Lord. He saw the

errors that had risen up amongst them, especially concerning the Person of Christ. He was still daily taught by the informing Spirit, and at length he bore his testimony; not so entirely of facts to be received, as of doctrines to be believed; he commences, not like Matthew with the record of a human genealogy, nor like Luke with a formal and orderly preface, but at once, as with a revelation come down out of heaven.

The fixed and set plan of this wonderful Gospel may be given in few words. It is to shew forth the glory of CHRIST as the SON of GOD, which had been beheld by John as he followed his Master in His seven journeys, to and fro, in the course of His ministry; he chronicles also seven miracles in proof of the Divine power of Christ.

1. That of Cana at the marriage feast, (chap. ii.)
2. His healing the son of Herod's officer, (chap. iv.)
3. Of the man at Bethesda, (chap. v.)
4. Feeding the multitude on five loaves and two fishes, (chap. vi. 9).
5. Walking on the sea, (chap. vi. 19).
6. Healing the man born blind, (chap. ix.)
7. The raising of Lazarus, (chap. xi.)

THE SEVEN JOURNEYS

are included in the same twelve chapters of the Gospel; and besides these, there is the final going up to be crucified at Jerusalem.

1. Into Galilee, (chap. i. 43; ii. 12).
2. To Jerusalem at the Passover in the first year of ministry, (chaps. ii., iv.)
3. To Jerusalem at the Passover in the second year of ministry, (chap. v.)

4. To Capernaum in Galilee where He taught and fed the multitude, (chap. vi.)

5. To Jerusalem, six months before his death, at the Feast of Tabernacles, (chaps. vii., viii.)

6. To Jerusalem at the Feast of Dedication, (chap. x. 22).

7. In Judea towards Bethany, (chap. xi.)

The remaining nine chapters record the last precious discourses of Christ, the Passion, Death, and Resurrection.

John does not give any of our Lord's parables; the number of which recorded by Matthew, Mark, and Luke, are more than thirty. The parables were striking stories, containing hidden truths, delivered to the multitudes, and oftentimes explained to the inner circle of the disciples.

THE PARABLES.

We may remember them in three groups: they all explain Christ's new kingdom and its laws.

The 1st series are drawn from the world of nature.

The Sower, the Wheat and the Tares, the Mustard Seed, the Fig-tree, the Leaven, the Hid Treasure, the Pearl of great price, the Net cast into the Sea.

The 2nd series are the parables drawn from the life of men.

The Two Debtors, the Merciless Servant, the Good Samaritan, the Friend at Midnight, the Rich Fool, the Wedding Feast, the Great Supper, the Lost Sheep, the Lost piece of Money, the Prodigal Son, the Unjust Steward, the Rich man and Lazarus, the Unjust Judge, the Pharisee and the Publican, the Labourers in the Vineyard.

The 3rd series are THE PROPHETIC PARABLES.

These were uttered at the close of our Lord's

ministry. They fortel the rejection of Israel and the Second Coming of our Lord, and are

The Pounds, the Two Sons, the Vineyard let out to Husbandmen, the Marriage Feast, the Wise and Foolish Virgins, the Talents, the Sheep and the Goats.

The *first* and *third* groups of parables belong to Matthew, the evangelist of the kingdom. The second group chiefly to Luke, who told of the SON of MAN to all mankind.

But JOHN the beloved, writing for the Christian Church, recounts *not* the parables but the Divine words that he had pondered in his heart for half a century, uttered as he lay on the human bosom of HIM whose Godhead he was chiefly to proclaim, in words which the Holy Spirit brought back to his memory afresh.

In his wonderful 14th, 15th, 16th, 17th chapters, he tells what the other evangelists had left untold, and what had chiefly built up his own faith in the divinity of his master. To him we go for the words uttered in the solemn privacy of the upper chamber, and for the parting lessons of the Saviour before His crucifixion; but it has been truly said, "John's resurrection chapters are the fullest and most glorious." The living God had shone upon His faithful eyes through the vail of his manhood; and "*that* disciple" was reserved to write the most awful and wonderful letter ever indited by mortal man, the REVELATION which Christ sent and signified by His angel unto His servant John.

A word or two first on the three short Epistles of John.

The first *Epistle*, it is said, includes nineteen passages so similar to an equal number of passages in the *Gospel* of John, that it must be seen the two

were by the same writer. He states his own purpose, to declare the word of life so that he and his readers may be brought together into communion with Christ Jesus.

He explains the nature and conditions of this union: that on the part of Christ, it must be through His own atoning blood and advocacy; on the part of man, by belief and love, producing holiness and obedience.

The two other Epistles are really appendices to the first Epistle, and are very short. The first is to a Christian lady, warning her not to abet by undue kindness and hospitality the teachers of false doctrine; shewing her that Christian love is a right affection springing from a right faith, and issuing in right conduct; and that wrong belief, therefore, destroys this love. It has been pointed out that of the thirteen verses composing the second Epistle, eight are to be found in the first Epistle.

The third Epistle commends to the kindness and hospitality of Gaius, a Christian layman, some Christian strangers whom Diotrephes, a presbyter, had refused to receive.

Both these epistles, therefore, apply to individual cases, though very profitable as examples of apostolic advice, often needed to this day.

THE BOOK OF REVELATION.

The words of this prophecy are fenced with plagues from heaven on any man who shall add to them or take away from them. (Chap. xxii. 18.) The inspired writer names himself, as he had not done in his gospel at the close of his record and says, "I, John, saw these things and heard them." He also commences this his message to the Seven Churches of Asia with his own name and super-

scription. We need not therefore trouble you with doubts about the human authorship of the marvellous book, though many have raised them; its date, by common consent, is at about the close of the first Christian century.

It declares itself to be primarily "a revelation from Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him to shew to His servants things which must shortly come to pass," and a blessing follows on those who read and hear it.

The style of the Greek in which it was written is thought to be different from that of John's Gospel; but this grand Epistle seems to have been indited in captivity, far from all books and learned helps, and Greek was not the apostle's native language, but Syriac. If tradition may be trusted, he wrote the Revelation in the midst of labour in the mines of the rough and rugged isle of Patmos. Such was the bare earthly locality, the Spirit chose for the unveiling of the Temple on high and its unearthly splendours.

If we ask who were to be the readers? the answer is, at first, the Seven Churches of Asia; and we are told what these Seven Churches were in the time of John; but the number *seven* is considered to mean, that the messages extend to the perfect or universal Church of Christ in every land. The Holy Ghost must have foreseen how they would comfort the suffering saints and martyrs of all ages to the end of time; but the literal Ephesus, Sardis, and Laodicea, are now in ruins, and Smyrna, Pergamos, Thyatira, and Philadelphia,—though prosperous towns still occupy their site—have had in this century to receive anew the light of the Word of God.

The ordinary reader certainly needs a few general

explanations that may enable him to view this book of Revelation *as a whole*, explanations in which most sound interpreters agree. It is generally believed to contain revelations from God on particular portions of the course of the Church universal from the time of the Apostle down to the time of the end.

John begins with an inscription to believers, "Grace be unto you, and peace .... from Jesus Christ, that loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood," and he then announces his message:

"Behold He cometh with clouds, and every eye shall see Him." This could not possibly have been written of anything *but* Christ's *second* coming; and a voice from heaven follows: "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord."

John then informs his fellow-sufferers, "companions in tribulation," that he had heard this voice, "as the sound of many waters" in Patmos, and had seen in vision the speaker, who must have recalled to him the prophet Daniel's awful description of "the Ancient of days," the hair of whose head was like the pure wool, and his throne the fiery flame. (Dan. vii. 9.) John marks also the golden girdle, and the feet that burned as in a furnace, but sinks in a death-swoon before the majesty of the glory. He is raised, and bidden not to fear, but to write; and he sees that this irradiate Being appears amid seven golden candlesticks. The Jewish Church had been symbolised by *one* seven-branched golden candlestick, the symbol which was at that moment carved in heathen scorn on the triumphal arch of Titus in Rome; but here in heaven were seven candlesticks, and the Lord holding seven stars in His right hand; and John is

informed that "the seven candlesticks are seven churches, and that their pastors are the seven stars."

The master had watched the light at Ephesus, and had marked the labours and the patience of the saints; but also in many, the "loss of their first love." To each of the Churches which are addressed *the same two things are said.* To each *first* "*I know thy works*," and to each *last*, there is promised a specific different blessing "*to him that overcometh.*"

"He that overcometh" at Ephesus "shall eat of tree of life."

" " at Smyrna, "shall not be hurt of the second death."

" " at Pergamos, "shall eat of the hidden manna."

" " at Thyatira, shall have "given him the morning star, and shall have power over the nations."

" " at Sardis, "shall be clothed in white raiment and be confessed before God and angels."

" " at Philadelphia, "shall be made a pillar in the heavenly temple, and shall have written upon him Christ's new name."

" " at Laodicea, "shall sit down with Christ on His throne."

John having delivered the messages to the Seven Churches in the first three chapters, the fourth brings us with him to the "door opened in heaven. Not with his bodily eyes, but "in the spirit he sees a throne circled by a rainbow, and guarded by four cherubic forms, and four-and-twenty elders.

"Account must be taken," says Dean Alford in his 'New Testament for English Readers' "of the *numbers* used in this book; these have always a symbolic meaning. Seven is the number of perfection. 'Seven spirits are before the throne,' seven churches represent the Church universal. The lamb has seven horns and seven eyes, and the series of God's judgments is each complete in itself. Seven is the number of seals, trumpets, thunders, vials.

"*Four* is the number of the earth. Four cherubic creatures are the symbols of creation, four seals, four trumpets, four vials consist of *physical* visitations. Four angels are loosed to slay.

"*Twelve* is the number belonging to the Church on earth. Twice twelve is the number of the heavenly elders, twelve times, twelve thousand the number of the sealed elect, the Church is the woman who has a crown of twelve stars, (chap. xii.) the heavenly city has twelve gates, and twelve foundations, on the gates the names of the twelve tribes, and on the foundations those of the twelve apostles; and in the midst of the city the tree of life brings forth twelve manner of fruits."

The half of seven is a ruling number in the Apocalyptic periods. The Apostle James had spoken of Elijah's drought as enduring $3\frac{1}{2}$ years.

$3\frac{1}{2}$ years, or time-times-and-a-half, were the saints to be persecuted. (Dan. vii. 25.)

$3\frac{1}{2}$ years or 1,260 days "or 42 months," the two witnesses in the Revelation prophesy in sackcloth.

$3\frac{1}{2}$ years or 1,260 days is the woman to be fed in the wilderness.

$3\frac{1}{2}$ years or 42 months is the period of the power of the first wild beast ascending from the sea.

Dean Alford declines to give an opinion on the counting of these days as years, and only takes the broad lines of this prophecy; of which he declares the greatest event is *the coming of the Lord in glory;* all visions, seals, trumpets, and vials, end in this; it begins and closes the Revelation. The *first* great key to the understanding of the book, is found in the Old Testament prophecies on the same subject, while the second key is our Lord's *own* prophetic discourse in Matthew xxiv. on the Mount of Olives.

Christ there gives with unerring certainty to His disciples the outlines of the main points of the future history of His Church on earth, its progress, its hindrances, and its corruptions, the trials of the faithful, the safety of God's elect, amid the judgments on the unbelieving, which are first poured out in the great TYPICAL judgment on the chosen people, the destruction of Jerusalem. At the time John writes that woe is *past;* and the Book of the Revelation sheds light on the secondary fulfilment of the Divine prophecy on no less than a world-wide scale.

"The whole creation groaneth," says Paul, Rom. viii. 22, and for what? "The manifestation of the sons of God." At the open door in heaven John gazes in, and sees on God's right hand a book sealed with seven seals, which the "Lamb slain" alone might open. As the first seal is opened, and the second, the third, the fourth, each of the four living creatures cries "Come and see," and the sight in awful vision is of the fourth part of the earth killed with sword, and with hunger, and with death, and with the beasts of the earth (Luke vi.), implying death by physical judgments on the earth itself. At the opening of the fifth seal comes the cry of the martyrs who had been slain for the word of God,

"Avenge, O Lord, our blood upon the earth," and to this the Lord listens, and the sixth seal brings us at once into the day of the wrath of the Lamb, though not until the servants of God are all sealed in their foreheads, and are found before the throne of God; not only the perfect number saved in the old Jewish Church, but the great multitude from every tongue and tribe who have come out of great tribulation, and whose robes are washed white in the blood of the Lamb, with all tears wiped away from all eyes for ever.

As in every dramatic composition the scenes change. The eighth chapter opens with a season of silence in heaven, and the ascent of the prayers of the saints; then the trumpets begin to sound, the first four dispensing (as the seals had done,) physical judgments on earth, and seas, and skies, and with the fifth trumpet Satanic power arises in smoke out of the bottomless pit in the symbolic form of locusts to plague the unrepentant of mankind; the sixth angel of the trumpet takes oath that there shall be time no longer, (or that *that* time shall last no longer) with voices of seven thunders, whose revelations John was *not* to write; but with the trumpet of the seventh angel we are told that the kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ.

The seals and the trumpets have developed the same history of judgments on mankind in general, but now the Christian Church in her corporate capacity, becomes the definite subject of the prophecy.

The 12th chapter begins with a great wonder in heaven. The woman and the serpent as in Genesis, are brought upon the scene, and the enmity between him and her seed re-declared, but the birth of the man-child who is to rule all nations, is

succeeded by His ascension to heaven and to the throne of God. The woman, the Church, flees into the wilderness from the persecuting serpent or dragon, and the "earth helped the woman" which may be interpreted of her shelter under friendly secular power by Constantine, and the checking of the fierce cruelties of the *Pagan* Roman empire towards the Christians. Although, alas! a beast rising out of the sea in the 13th chapter next receives from the serpent *his* power and seat and great authority. The *Pagan* head has been wounded unto death by the Goths and Vandals, but his deadly wound was healed, and *Papal* Rome, lamb-like in appearance, for Satan always counterfeits Christ, but dragon-like in reality, still makes war with the saints to overcome them, a priestly persecuting power leagued with the secular, and inasmuch as Reformed Churches recede towards what is papal and priestly, do they not belong to that second wild beast to this day?

In the 14th chapter the Lamb of God is on Mount Zion with the *first fruits* of His people, and three angels go forth thence, the first having the everlasting gospel to preach to every nation and tongue, and kindred, and people; the fulness of *witness* to the doomed earth, and he takes for his text—"Fear God, for the hour of his judgment is come."

The saints on earth are still witnessing, and God's own Book is now beginning to do so everywhere, for it is translated into 180 languages and spread over the world in continuous millions, but the message of the 14th ch. of Revelation must be *supernatural and future.* The angel cries—"The hour of his judgment is come." We may possibly soon listen to that cry, and then the second angel will follow with—"Babylon is fallen, is fallen," while a third forbids receiving

the mark of the beast or the number of *his* name, which will for ever preclude an entrance on the sea of glass, or having written upon us "*the new name*" of Him who sits upon the cloud, and who will reap alike in that dread hour the *harvest* of redeemed souls, and at the same time the clusters of the vine of the earth which are to be cast into the great wine press of the wrath of God.

"I think there is reason," says Dean Alford, "to interpret this '*harvest*' of the ingathering of the Lord's people, this '*vintage*' of the crushing of His enemies; both are named in the 14th chapter, *but shortly* mentioned, and then, according to the usage of this book, the succeeding chapters describe them in fuller detail."

The vintage is expanded in the series of the vials seven in number, like the seals and trumpets gone before; the first four, as previously, relating to physical judgments on earth, seas, rivers, stars, but ever with reference to those who worship the beast and have *his* mark; the fifth and sixth vials concern the throne and kingdom of the beast and the Euphrates, the grand localities of false religions.

Much as been written on the book of Revelation to shew that all the seals, trumpets, and vials, have had a fulfilment in the history of the Church already. Possibly they have, a *premonitory* one; but it must be evident to all in the present day that "Babylon," the symbolic name for Antichristian worldly power, with spiritual pretensions, is *not yet fallen;* and marvellous sign of the times! the Pope of Rome at this moment says that he is fast regaining in Protestant England more than he has lost in Spain and Austria.

We leave therefore what is *certainly future* to reverent meditation—the Fall of Babylon—the

Binding of Satan—the First Resurrection—the Thousand Millennial Years—the Final Judgment—the New Heavens and the New Earth.

We have now passed up those solemn and eternal stairs, beside which in their order, one above another, stand Moses and Joshua, Samuel and the seers of his period, David and Solomon, Ezra, and Nehemiah, and Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, with all the prophets, who by their inspired writings, have led our enquiring steps upward to the broad landing place of the Redeemer's First Advent.

And thence by aid of the Evangelists Matthew, Mark, and Luke; by the teaching of the Apostles Peter, and Paul, and James, and Jude; we have been handed onward to John the beloved disciple, who by his Master's choice holds open "the door in heaven:" we look in and watch, as he did, the enacting of the mighty drama of the ages, and mark the history of the universal Church of God.

We have come at last to the topmost step of that wondrous flight of stairs which Divine wisdom has built up for men even upon earth, whereby they may approach "the temple of the tabernacle of the testimony in heaven, in which is the ark of his testament." (Rev. xv. 5; xi. 19.) Here is the revelation of that "Temple of God," of which the gorgeous fabric of Solomon in Jerusalem, and his "ascent by which he went up to the house of the Lord," gives us but the faintest shadow, though it astonished the Queen of Sheba; for the Apostle John has found words to eclipse all the glory of the earthly temple when that "door is opened in heaven," and when he bids us look in over the "sea of glass mingled with fire;" and listen to the "song of Moses and the Lamb" hymned by the harps of God.

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